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CORRESPONDENCE

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RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE.

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Correspondence respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe.

No. 1.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Egerton.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 31, 1900.

THE Greek Chargé d'Affaires stated to Mr. Villiers on the 21st instant that his Government desired to call the very serious attention of the Great Powers to the state of affairs existing in Macedonia.

The Greeks in that province were suffering severely at the hands of the Bulgarians. Frequent outrages and crimes of violence occurred; recently, for instance, a murderous attack had been made on a Greek doctor. It was not only the duty, but the interest, of the Porte to repress these disorders and to establish proper government.

I have informed M. Métaxas that I will make his communication known to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 2.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 8.)

My Lord, *Sophia, January* 5, 1901.

THE News Agency having reported yesterday the occurrence of serious disorders at Ishtib, in the Vilayet of Kossovo, during which several Turks were killed and many Bulgarians arrested, I asked M. Tontcheff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, this morning, whether he knew anything about it. He said he had received information that a disturbance had taken place, but did not know the cause of it, which the News Agency had stated to be the opposition of the Bulgarians to the consecration of Mgr. Firmilian as Metropolitan of Uskub under the Patriarchate, which was said to be imminent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 3.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 16.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1901.

HAVING heard from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub that a conflict occurred at Ishtib on the 3rd instant, in the course of which eight Turkish soldiers were killed in the attempt to arrest certain agents of the Macedonian Committee of Sophia, and that the Vali of Uskub had proceeded to the spot to restore order, I took

occasion to inquire at the Porte what further intelligence had been received of this disturbance.

The Turkish version is that a band of some fifty Bulgarians belonging to the Macedonian Committee crossed the Bulgarian frontier into Turkey, and were driven back into Bulgaria after an encounter with a body of about 100 Turkish troops. Lives are said to have been lost on both sides.

It is believed at the Porte that this incursion was intended as a demonstration against the appointment by the Œcumenical Patriarch of the Servian Bishop Firmilianos as Metropolitan of Uskub. This appointment has not yet been confirmed by a formal Turkish Berat, but the Prelate in question exercises, nevertheless, the functions of Metropolitan, to the great discontent of the Bulgarian population. The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs appears to think that the Berat should now be given, as a protest against the intimidation sought to be exercised by the Macedonian Committee.

I learn from a further report received from Mr. Vice-Consul Fontana, by telegraph, this morning, that compromising papers, as well as a large quantity of arms and ammunition, have been discovered in the Bulgarian quarter of Ishtib; that fighting between Bulgarians and Turkish soldiers has taken place at Malesh, near the frontier, whither the Vali has now proceeded; that fifty Bulgarians have been imprisoned at Kumanovo, and fifty-four more dispatched to Uskub from Ishtib; and that houses are also being searched and arrests made at Uskub.

Communications are much impeded by snow and intense cold.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to Sir G. Bonham and Mr. Elliot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 4.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received January* 21.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 15, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship, with reference to Mr. de Bunsen's despatch of the 11th instant, that I have to-day received telegraphic information from Mr. Vice-Consul Fontana that the Vali has returned to Uskub, and that quiet is now restored.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 5.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received January* 28.)

My Lord, *Sophia, January* 22, 1901.

DURING an interview with General Petroff, I took the opportunity of inquiring what measures were being adopted with regard to the Macedonian Committee.

General Petroff informed me, in reply, that he had lately repeated his orders to the provincial authorities, who had received instructions to arrest and prosecute any individual against whom complaints of extortion had been brought. Several fresh cases had, in fact, occurred, but the severity of the measures employed was producing its effect, and he inquired whether any case of blackmail had been brought to my notice during the last fortnight—a query which I answered in the negative

General Petroff went on to say that, if necessary, he would find means of suppressing the Committees entirely, and in any case he was determined to render them innocuous. He had already arrested and sent into the interior of the country a number of undesirable Macedonians who had assembled in the capital, and he would take measures to have the remainder dispersed. At the same time the General informed me that he could exercise no control over the Central Revolutionary Committee in Macedonia itself, as it was an organization entirely independent of the Committee in Bulgaria, and was, moreover, well supplied with arms. The Turkish Government was acquainted with its proceedings.

I told General Petroff that I was glad to hear of his determination not to tolerate the excesses of the Macedonian Committee, and that a firm attitude on his part could not fail to have a salutary effect on the Revolutionary Society in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

No. 6.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 29, 1901.

THE French Ambassador stated on the 21st instant that the Greek Government had called the attention of the French Government to the danger arising out of the proceedings of the Bulgarian Committee in Macedonia, and to the importance of measures being taken to repress the outrages which were being committed by agents of the Committee.

M. Cambon said that instructions had been sent to the French Ambassador at Constantinople to call the attention of the Porte to the matter, and to urge that steps should be taken to secure a better state of public order, and that the French Representative at Sophia had also been instructed to represent to the Bulgarian Government the expediency of using any influence they possessed to discourage and check these lawless acts.

His Excellency asked if His Majesty's Government had received a similar communication from the Greek Government, and whether they had taken any action in regard to it.

You will find a record of the communication in my despatch to Sir E. Egerton of the 31st ultimo.

It would be advisable that you should take an opportunity of speaking to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the same sense as your French colleague.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 7.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 4.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, January* 30, 1901.

WITH reference to Mr. Elliot's despatch of the 5th instant regarding the disturbances reported to have taken place at Ishtib, in Macedonia, on the 3rd instant, I have the honour to report that I took advantage of General Petroff's first reception this morning to address his Excellency on the subject, informing him that, according to the Turkish version, the affray had been the result of an incursion by a band of Bulgarians belonging to the Macedonian Committee at Sophia (see Mr. de Bunsen's despatch to your Lordship of the 11th instant).

His Excellency declared that the assertions of the Vali of Uskub were entirely incorrect. There had been no Bulgarian incursion, and, as a matter of fact, the action of the Ottoman soldiery had in the first instance been directed against a single individual, belonging, perhaps, to the Central Committee in Macedonia, who had concealed himself in a house in the Bulgarian quarter of Ishtib, and who, after having been burned out of his place of refuge, had escaped, only to die of his wounds. The incident had, however, so alarmed the Kaïmakam, that he had sent for troops to Uskub, and the usual burning and pillage and arrests of innocent persons had consequently ensued.

His Excellency declared he was doing his utmost to keep the Macedonian movement within bounds, but he must have assistance at Constantinople if he was to succeed in his task.

I told General Petroff that he could not expect such countenance as he desired unless the Bulgarian Government adopted a less complaisant attitude towards the

* Also to Mr. McGregor.

Macedonian Committees, and that I thought energetic repression of a criminal propaganda would be the surest means of gaining the confidence of His Majesty's Government.

His Excellency replied that he had already begun to apply measures of that nature, and he was at present endeavouring to bring about the dissolution of the Committee, which had already resigned. This fact would be made public in a few days, and, with regard to the recent trial at Bucharest, he hoped that in a fortnight the Roumanian dossier would be ready for submission to the judicial authorities.

No. 8.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 11.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 4, 1901.

WITH reference to Mr. de Bunsen's despatch of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Acting Consul-General Shipley respecting the Ishtib disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Acting Consul-General Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, January* 23, 1901.

I HAVE just been informed by M. Schopoff, Bulgarian Commercial Agent here, who called on me for the purpose, that he had received from an eye-witness "further and completely trustworthy" details of the recent disturbances at Ishtib. M. Schopoff's informant is a landlord of Ishtib, and till the disturbances he owned a house in the suburb affected.

His account of the incident is as follows:—

One Bulgarian brigand, being wounded in an encounter with zaptiehs at some distance from Ishtib, took refuge in a house of a suburb of that town with the object of nursing his wound. The Military Kaïmakam, hearing of the man's hiding-place, sent a Yuzbashi with the Mukhtar of the village, a Bulgarian, to arrest him. The latter, seeing a Yuzbashi enter his house with the Mukhtar and a gendarme, fired, killing the officer. The village magnate fled, while the gendarme, on trying to close with the brigand, was also shot.

The Kaïmakam then had the house surrounded by troops, who kept up a brisk fusillade on it till darkness came on, when they set alight to it, not, however, till fourteen of their number had been killed or wounded. Under cover of darkness the murderer made his escape good through the adjoining houses, but died shortly after unbeknown to the authorities (who imagined him to have perished in the flames) of his wounds.

The troops had, in the meanwhile, set fire to three neighbouring houses, of which one belonged to the Bulgarian individual who is now here taking steps with a view to obtaining compensation. The Vali of Kossovo arrived at Ishtib from Uskub after the main incident was closed.

No. 9.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 11.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 6, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica reporting on the state of unrest existing among the Albanians in the Vilayet of Janina.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Acting Consul-General Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, January* 23, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency the following information which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Millelire.

One of the most influential members of the league of young Albanians, a certain Malik Bey, of the Caza of Prémèti, took to the mountains with over 200 Palicares some months ago, and lived there in a state of express rebellion against the authorities till lately, when he went to Corfu for the purpose of purchasing arms and ammunition. At Corfu he met Khain Effendi, an Albanian of Colonia, in the neighbourhood of Janina, who was about to return to his post of Kaïmakam of Vallona. After his interview with Malik, however, instead of going back to Vallona, Khain accompanied him to Brussels, where the two joined other young Albanians, who have taken refuge there.

It is said that both intend returning in the spring with the object of organizing a movement against the Government, choosing as their opportunity the popular irritation against the authorities, which occurs yearly on the latter's uprooting the tobacco plants laid down without the requisite permit from the Régie.

The Vali of Janina, knowing that Malik Bey has relations with several Beys of Delvino, and suspecting Yaya Cini Aga, Omer Bey, and Hussein Aga of being his accomplices, yet not daring to arrest them openly in Delvino for fear of the people, had them trapped as they were returning to their farms and carried to Janina. These arrests have caused much fermentation among the Albanians and general dissatisfaction among the Moslem population, who maintain that there is no shadow of justification for the arrests.

No. 10.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 18.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, February* 12, 1901.

AT a time when there is every indication of a disturbance in Macedonia, it is satisfactory to find that, at all events on the frontier of Servia and Albania, the political prospect is considered by the Turkish Minister to be rather less menacing than is usual at this time of year.

Fethy Pasha bases his optimistic views on the visit recently paid to Belgrade of certain Arnaut Chiefs from the frontier districts of Albania, who have been spending some days in this capital. The object of their visit has been to see a Servian officer, M. Bogosavljevitch, at present, I understand, Chief Superintendent of the Belgrade Fire Brigade, but who has been previously employed as officer of the guard on the Albanian frontier, and who ingratiated himself with the Albanians while holding that position.

The expenses of their journey and of their stay in Belgrade have, it seems, been defrayed by this ex-officer, who is also the editor of a Servian newspaper, the "Brotherhood," the object of which is to inculcate good relations on the frontier districts.

As these Chiefs have now returned to their districts well satisfied with the cordiality of their reception, Fethy Pasha hopes than one result of their visit will be to improve the relations between the two races.

The basis on which his Excellency's hopes rest appears to be somewhat uncertain, especially as M. Bogosavljevitch is not a man of any importance, but it is, at all events, an indication of a better feeling than exists in those districts where the Macedonian Revolutionary Committee exercise their influence, causing the Turkish Government, as I gathered from his Excellency, a very large expenditure for the preservation of peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 11.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 25.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 13, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Consul-General Shipley, by Mr. Consul Fontana, as to the recent disturbances at Ishtib.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Consul Fontana to Acting Consul-General Shipley.

(Extract.) *Uskub, January* 20, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report with reference to the recent disturbance at Ishtib.

On the 1st of this month a telegram was received by the Governor-General from Ishtib stating that in an attempt to arrest certain Bulgarians believed to be agents of the Macedonian Committee, bombs were thrown and shots fired from a house killing a Captain and two gendarmes and wounding several others. The Vali thereupon hastened to the telegraph office, where he remained the greater part of the night, telegraphing three times to the Palace for permission to proceed in person to Ishtib.

In reply to his third telegram the Vali received word that an Imperial Iradé had been issued instructing him to at once repair to Ishtib, and do what was necessary there.

The following morning the Governor-General, accompanied by the Colonel of Gendarmerie, the Chief of Police, a Juge d'Instruction, and some thirty gendarmes, left by train for Ishtib, leaving the Commandant, Moustafa Nouri Pasha, to replace him during his absence.

Upon arriving at Ishtib the Vali drew a cordon of troops and zaptiehs around the Bulgarian quarter, and instituted a house-to-house search for arms and incriminating papers.

In one house where there were known to be a large quantity of cartridges and other explosives, four resolute Bulgarians had barricaded themselves, refusing to surrender at the authorities' summons. The house was consequently blockaded by a cordon of gendarmes and set on fire.

Two of the Bulgarians perished in the flames, the other two escaped by breaking through the cordon, and one gendarme was killed. The cartridges and other weapons were destroyed by the fire.

On the 3rd January a battalion of troops was ordered from Sienitza to Ishtib, although there was already a large force of cavalry and artillery in the latter town. The search for revolutionaries, arms, and papers continued, resulting finally in the arrest of some fifteen Bulgarians (since sent to Uskub), the discovery of five or six rifles and revolvers and a few papers of little relative value. The report set on foot by officials at Uskub that large supplies of arms of the latest system had been unearthed at Ishtib proved entirely unfounded.

A brush between zaptiehs and Bulgarians was said to have taken place at Malesh, but no arms or papers, I understand, were discovered there. Shortly before the disturbance at Ishtib, some twenty Bulgarians had been arrested at Kumanova under charge of having received a consignment of arms from the former town. Later the number of arrests was increased to about fifty, but, so far, no arms would appear to have been discovered in Bulgarian possession at Kumanova.

The Vali returned with his suite to Uskub on the 12th instant.

No. 12.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 25.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, February* 12, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 29th ultimo, instructing me to urge upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in

similar language to my French colleague, the necessity of taking steps to repress the outrages which are being perpetrated by agents of the Bulgarian Committees in Macedonia.

I am only waiting for the return of the French Ambassador early next week to carry out this instruction, and I understand that the Italian Ambassador has been told to act in concert with his other colleagues in the matter.

The condition of affairs in Macedonia is far from satisfactory, and between the Bulgarian Committees on one side and the Turkish authorities on the other the unfortunate Christian inhabitants are sorely beset, but I am not prepared to say that the general condition is worse than for some years past. The Committees are, perhaps, more active and more daring in their attacks on Bulgarians who will not actively join in their ranks, and on Greeks and Servians who are opposed to their propaganda, and they have bought the connivance of a good number of the Turkish gendarmerie and other officials, who have to struggle for their livelihood as best they can, owing to the scanty pay they receive from the Imperial Government; but I have heard much to show that the bulk of the population only long for a quiet life. There is little doubt, however, that the activity of the Local Committees depends in great measure upon the vitality and resources of the Central Committees in Bulgaria, and that if General Petroff controls or suppresses the Central Committees, as he promises to do if successful in the elections now taking place, a great step will have been taken to check the outrages, of which the Greek and other nationalities, as well as the Turks themselves, complain.

The Greek Government has, no doubt, made strong representations to the Russian Government in the same sense as those repeated in your Lordship's despatch of the 31st December to Sir E. Egerton, and I hear from several quarters that at an audience with the Sultan on the 10th instant the Russian Ambassador strongly advised His Imperial Majesty to take measures to suppress the Bulgarian Committees, who were, his Excellency said, the cause of many of the crimes and excesses committed in the province.

No. 13.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 25.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 19, 1901.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 29th ultimo, I took an opportunity yesterday of an interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs to draw his Excellency's attention to the reports which were received from various quarters respecting the outrages committed and general condition of insecurity in Macedonia.

Tewfik Pasha replied that this state of affairs was mainly caused by armed bands of Bulgarians crossing the frontier, and by the activity of the Bulgarian Committees throughout the provinces. He had recently caused representations to be made at Sophia, but he had received an evasive reply. The Ottoman Government were most anxious to maintain order and to prevent excesses of any sort, and if disturbances occurred, he quite agreed that the mode of suppression should be both humane and legal.

I had previously arranged with M. Bapst, the French Chargé d'Affaires, to speak to Tewfik Pasha in much the same sense as he had already done, and I understand that my German and Austrian colleagues have used similar language, and I believe also the Italian Ambassador.

I hear that the Ottoman Government is rather uneasy lest the insurrectionary Bulgarian Committees succeed in provoking serious disturbances; but I do not think that there is more ground for this anxiety than is usual at this time of year.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 14.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 25.)

(Extract.) *St. Petersburgh, February 21, 1901.*

TALKING of the state of affairs in the Balkan States yesterday, Count Lamsdorff said that the press had somewhat exaggerated the real facts as to the action taken by Russia, with a view to neutralizing the dangerous activity of the Macedonian Committee.

He had, he said, never ceased to urge on the Bulgarian Government advice in this sense, and his representations had, he was happy to believe, greatly strengthened the hands of the Prince of Bulgaria, whose position was a difficult one, but who seemed to have now realized the true character of the Secret Committee, which had lost all claim to be regarded as patriotic, and had degenerated into anarchical propaganda, whose chief aim was to extort money by intimidation.

As regarded the press report of strong representations made by the Russian Government on the same subject at Constantinople, his Excellency knew nothing, but he had certainly discussed the whole question of the Macedonian agitation very thoroughly with M. Zinovieff during the last visit of the latter to Russia, and M. Zinovieff was thoroughly conversant with his views on the subject.

Count Lamsdorff did not seem apprehensive of any serious trouble in that part of the world at present.

No. 15.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 25.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, February 23, 1901.*

FROM a short conversation I had with Count Goluchowski on the 19th instant, I gathered that his Excellency considers there is very little real danger of serious trouble breaking out in the Balkans at present.

His Excellency evidently believed that the warnings given both at Sophia and Constantinople would be listened to, and he considered that the action apparently lately taken by Russia would check any further developments, at all events for the present, of the Macedonian Committee intrigues.

No. 16.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, February 21, 1901.*

OWING to the continued indisposition of the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, neither Mr. McGregor nor I have yet been able to execute the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 29th January to speak to General Petroff of the danger arising out of the proceedings of the Bulgarian Committee in Macedonia, and of the importance of measures being taken to repress the outrages committed by its agents.

The French Agent, who received similar instructions by telegraph some days before the date of your Lordship's despatch, and was able to act upon them immediately, tells me that he admits the force of the plea put forward by General Petroff, like all his predecessors, that he has no control over the proceedings of the Committees in Macedonia; but he says he is quite convinced of the sincerity of the General's declaration that he is determined to put an end to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committee in Bulgaria.

My French colleague says that cases of blackmailing by the Committee have much diminished, and he says he believes the General intends to insist on the resignation of Sarafoff and his colleagues, and to see that the Committee is composed of men who are amenable to Government control. This course, although it will, no doubt, be effectual in keeping the proceedings of the Committee within bounds, is open to the objection that whatever action it may take hereafter the Government will be held responsible for.

Among the measures taken by General Petroff is the suppression throughout the country of the so-called Rifle Clubs, unauthorized Associations affiliated to the Mace-

donian Society, and devoting much of their attention to quasi-military exercises. A meeting was held at Sophia on the 15th instant to protest against the suppression of these Clubs, but it passed off quietly, probably owing to the knowledge that General Petroff is not a man to be intimidated.

The language reported to have been used by the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople at an audience of the Sultan, with regard to the repression of Bulgarian agitation in Macedonia, has created a profound impression here, and is even taken by a part of the local press as giving the Sultan a free hand to deal with the Bulgarians in Macedonia as he did with the Armenians in Asia Minor, without interference on the part of Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 17.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received Marhh 4.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 23, 1901.

ACCORDING to reports received by several Embassies here within the last few days, there was a serious encounter on the 18th instant between a Macedonian insurrectionary band and the Ottoman troops, in which seven or eight Turkish gendarmes and soldiers, and about the same number of Bulgarians, were killed. The encounters took place at Boyafeldji, close to Ghevgheli, on the Salonica Railway, or in close proximity, but up to the present I have received no report from His Majesty's Consulate-General at Salonica on the subject.

I happened to call on the Russian Ambassador this afternoon, and on referring to this affair M. Zinovieff said that the Bulgarian Agent had just been to see him to complain of the conduct of the Ottoman authorities, and to request him to make representations to the Porte.

His Excellency told M. Gueshoff that, as far as he was aware of what had taken place, the Turkish authorities had only acted in legitimate defence, and were quite justified in their action.

His Excellency further told M. Gueshoff that he considered the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees were responsible for a great deal of the disorder and crime that existed in Macedonia; they had appointed so-called Bulgarian Commercial Agents, who were little else than revolutionary agents, and whose main occupation seemed to consist in joining Revolutionary Committees, placing them in communication with the Macedonian Committees of Bulgaria, and assisting them to procure arms, and generally to organize an insurrectionary movement.

M. Gueshoff observed that these remarks could not be fairly made with respect to the policy of the present Bulgarian Government, whose efforts were directed to control and, if possible, suppress the Macedonian Committees, to which M. Zinovieff replied that the disturbance at Ghevgheli and those that had occurred in other places were the natural consequences of the policy of Bulgaria for years past, and they must be prepared for the consequences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 18.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 27, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica, reporting on the Bulgarian agitation in Macedonia, and ending with an account of the recent incident at Ghevgheli.

This despatch has reached me just as the King's messenger is about to start.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Acting Consul-General Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, February* 23, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the local authorities have received orders from Constantinople which have occasioned very energetic measures against the Bulgarians, a number (stated as high as 150) of whom have been arrested on suspicion. Of these about a third were taken in this town, which it seems they have made their head-quarters for some time past, leaving it on their errands of propaganda, and returning to it as the safest place when their commission was executed.

Besides these, several men of more or less prominent position at Salonica have been arrested, on the evidence of prisoners or documents found in their possession, for corresponding with the Committee at Sophia, and transmitting its orders to the active members. Among these is one well-known doctor, Tatarcheff, a letter from whom to two "Committajis" of Monastir, ordering the assassination of a certain Jonnides, was discovered on the arrest of the former; the Director of the Bulgarian School, and a Bulgarian School Inspector, a bookseller, and an apothecary.

A Special Examining Commission has been formed, composed of a police officer from Constantinople, whose name is given in the local papers as Niazi Bey, and at the Konak as Kemal Bey, the Chiefs of Police and Gendarmerie, the Chief Secretary of the Criminal Court, and a lower official of the same. I am informed that it is only the last two that sit regularly. Of the prisoners, forty have been so far committed for trial, and a few have been released. Of these latter, one is a priest from the village of Kilkich, a man against whom many charges have been brought during the past years.

The Bulgarian Agent tells me that as far as he can ascertain the investigation is being carried out in a most proper manner, no actual cruelty being perpetrated to make the prisoners confess. The only thing complained of is the dungeon in which they are confined. Besides suspects, the police have laid hands (so the Defterdar informed Sir Alfred Biliotti) on a considerable quantity of completely new weapons, rifles, revolvers, and daggers, all of the same pattern and workmanship, but with no name by which their origin can be determined, though it is suspected that a certain factory in Bulgaria supplied them. In addition, a great quantity of incriminating papers have been seized, including twelve different kinds of cyphers, ready for printing and distribution, and a bag of gold coin was taken from one individual who was trying to escape from the town.

The Defterdar further informed Sir Alfred Biliotti that the Bulgarian Agency was deeply suspected on information gleaned from prisoners and documents, and I now learn, from good authority, that instructions have been requested from Constantinople on the subject.

M. Schopoff himself has confessed that there undoubtedly was the beginning of a movement against the Government, and the American missionaries, who know the people well, tell me that whereas in former years they used to hear of projects and plans "for a rising in the spring," they now hear nothing, neither the Turks nor the Bulgarians ever alluding to the existence of troubles. They consider this silence, taken in conjunction with the distribution of arms and money, and the quiet but determined activity which they have noticed in the villages, as very ominous. The local authorities, too, are unusually reticent, no information being obtainable these past few days from reliable sources, a fact which has delayed this report.

The striking feature about the present affair is the ease with which prisoners are induced to denounce others. It seems certain that no illegitimate means are being used for the purpose; yet it is on the sole evidence of the first three men arrested on suspicion that the subsequent measures were taken. The only prisoners who have refused to give evidence are the two schoolmasters and the doctor above mentioned.

This seems to me to point to two conclusions, namely, that the authorities have laid hands so far on only three real members of the Sophia Committee in this town, the rest of the prisoners being ordinary Macedonian Bulgarians; and, secondly, that the ordinary Macedonian Bulgarian who works for the Committee does so, either because, having passed through a Bulgarian Gymnasium, he will not return to his village to earn his livelihood by manual labour, and yet cannot find "suitable employment" for his brain, or because he prefers to live by brigandage, political or other—

in either case he falls into the hands of the Committee as much as does the farmer who remains in his village and is sought out by it and forced to subscribe to it or act for it. But with it all the Macedonian Bulgarian is unable to shake off that hereditary dread of the Turkish authorities, which seems handed down from father to son, and which makes him confess all that he knows, not to the zaptieh, who brutally ill-treats him, but to the properly constituted Court, where he undergoes cross-examination, eliciting from him more perhaps than he intends to avow.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that an active band of Bulgarians generally, if not always, contains one or more emissaries of the Sophia Committee, without whose presence and encouragement it seems highly doubtful whether the Macedonian Bulgarian peasant would ever move against the local authorities or the other inhabitants of the country.

The evidence given by the first three prisoners, who were stopped (with a fourth who committed suicide on the spot) while trying to escape from the town, led to orders being sent to Ghevgheli to arrest a number of Bulgarians at Bialtza (Turkish Biaftzi), a village some 8 kilom. from Ghevgheli. Accounts of subsequent events are very contradictory, but it appears that the Bulgarians shot the officer and two of the three zaptiehs sent to arrest them. The third zaptieh in the meanwhile gave the alarm at Ghevgheli, and a church in which the Bulgarians had taken refuge, was surrounded on the following morning, *i.e.*, last Monday. In consequence of the inability of the local forces to cope with the Bulgarians, eighty men left here with two guns under the command of the Chief of the Gendarmerie, who returned on Tuesday evening with an escort of ten men, two prisoners, and five wounded. He is said to have lost eight killed, besides the men who were shot on Sunday and Monday, who, the postal cavass was informed at Ghevgheli, numbered nine.

The Bulgarians lost ten killed, whose heads, I hear on good authority, were brought here last night; two were taken prisoners, one being wounded, and the other, the priest of the village, and two escaped.

A Commission arrived here from Constantinople some three days ago, consisting of Miralay Behdin Bey, Kaïmakams Noury and Temir Beys, and a Bimbashi. The two former left yesterday for Uskub and the Bimbashi for Monastir. Their errand is unknown, the greatest secrecy and caution being exercised at the hotel, where they put up.

A second Commission is expected here on Saturday night, the supposed object of which is an investigation into the incidents at Salonica and Ghevgheli.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 19.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 4.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, February* 27, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 21st instant, I have the honour to report that on the 25th instant I saw General Petroff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and, as instructed by your Lordship's despatch of the 29th January, represented to him the danger arising out of the proceedings of the Bulgarian Committee in Macedonia, and the expediency of using any influence possessed by the Bulgarian Government to discourage and check the lawless acts committed by the agents of that Committee. I mentioned particularly the murder of the Greek, Dr. Sakellarios, at Salonica, and the more recent murderous assault upon a Servian priest at Uskub.

General Petroff did not, as I expected, plead inability to interfere in matters which occurred beyond the limits of the Principality. On the contrary, he said he was fully aware of the danger of the proceedings of the Committee, and the harm they did to the Macedonian cause, and said he had done all he could to get their activity restrained within bounds. He could now do no more, for a provisional Government such as his, within a few days of the end of its existence, could not speak with any authority. The Uskub crime, he said, was committed by an ordinary drunken brawler, and not by an agent of the Committee.

Since I saw General Petroff, I have received from him communication of a copy of a *note verbale* which he has addressed to the Ottoman Representative here in reply to the inquiries of the Turkish Government as to what measures the Bulgarian

Government propose to take with a view to put an end to the agitations directed against the good order and security of the neighbouring provinces of the Empire. I have the honour to inclose it herewith. It protests against the attempt to saddle the Bulgarian Government with the responsibility for occurrences which have taken place, or may be about to take place, in Macedonia; it asserts that of all the accusations brought by the Porte against the Macedonian Committee in Bulgaria the only one which is true is that its agents have levied blackmail upon natives and foreigners in the Principality, and declares that the most stringent orders have been given for the arrest and trial of such persons; it professes the readiness of the Bulgarian Government to punish all public attacks, whether spoken or printed, against the person of the Sultan, but its inability to suppress those which are directed against the maladministration of the Turkish authorities; it refers to the dissolution of the Rifle Clubs; it asserts the efficacy of the measures taken by the Bulgarian Government to assure the security of the frontier; and it concludes by repudiating all responsibility for the disturbance of order in Macedonia, and by throwing it upon the Turco-Albanian Committees, whose impunity in crime is the source of all the evil.

In the course of my conversation with General Petroff, I asked him what was the present position of affairs as regards Sarafoff and the other members of the Macedonian Committee. He replied that a Congress would shortly be held at Sophia, at which the present members of the Committee would resign, and be replaced by others of more moderate views. Upon my suggesting the possibility of the Congress re-electing the same men, he rejoined that the Government would take good care that that did not happen.

Inclosure in No. 19.

Note Verbale.

DEPUIS quelque temps, par suite de certains rapports qui lui sont parvenus, la Sublime Porte se montre très préoccupée de l'activité des Comités Macédoniens en Bulgarie et demande quelles mesures compte prendre le Gouvernement Princier pour mettre un terme à des agitations politiques dirigées contre l'ordre et la sécurité des provinces de l'Empire limitrophes de la Principauté.

D'après ces rapports, quelques agents des Comités emploient la menace ou la violence pour faire des collectes d'argent au profit d'une cause révolutionnaire; d'autres publient des journaux, convoquent des meetings où ils excitent l'opinion publique contre les autorités Turques en leur imputant toutes sortes de crimes et d'atrocités; d'aucuns organisent des bandes armées pour commettre des actes de brigandage en Turquie; d'autres encore, avec l'aide d'officiers Bulgares, commandent des exercices militaires afin d'apprendre le maniement des armes à ceux qui devront, à un moment donné, former des bandes révolutionnaires destinées à faire irruption dans les vilayets voisins; et par tous ces moyens, les Comités ne poursuivent qu'un but, celui de provoquer une insurrection générale en Macédoine; et en présence de ces menées subversives, les autorités Bulgares restent inactives ou impuissantes.

Ce n'est pas pour la première fois que le Gouvernement Princier se trouve obligé de relever les exagérations voulues des rapports qui parviennent à la Sublime Porte et de répondre à des accusations dénuées de fondement. Ce ne sera pas non plus la dernière fois qu'il aura lieu de constater cette habitude invétérée que l'on a d'exagérer tout ce qui se passe en Bulgarie, ainsi que cette tendance systématique à faire remonter au Gouvernement Bulgare la responsabilité des événements qui se sont produits en Macédoine et même de ceux qui pourraient y survenir.

De tous les faits signalés à la Sublime Porte, un seul est absolument exact: quelques agents des Comités Macédoniens se sont livrés à des manœuvres de chantage pour extorquer de l'argent à des ressortissants Bulgares et étrangers. Or, le Ministère Princier de l'Intérieur a donné aux Préfectures les ordres les plus catégoriques à l'égard de ces individus dont plusieurs sont arrêtés et seront déférés à la justice pour être jugés conformément aux Articles 330 et 333 du Code Pénal.

En ce qui concerne les délits commis par la voie de la presse ou par la parole en des réunions publiques, la Sublime Porte voudra bien reconnaître que le Gouvernement Bulgare n'a jamais refusé, sur sa demande, de poursuivre d'office ceux qui étaient incriminés pour offenses et outrages envers Sa Majesté le Sultan. Mais, s'il s'agit des critiques et des attaques parfois violentes publiées dans les journaux ou prononcées dans des meetings contre certains agents de l'Administration Turque,

le Gouvernement Princier n'y peut rien; il appartient à la Sublime Porte de démontrer que les abus de pouvoir imputés à ses autorités n'existent pas en Turquie.

Quant aux bandes armées qui menaceraient de traverser la frontière pour se livrer au brigandage dans les vilayets voisins, le Gouvernement Princier s'estime heureux de pouvoir affirmer hautement que ce n'est pas sur son territoire que de pareilles bandes tenteraient de s'organiser. Et sans insister davantage sur ce point, il se borne à confirmer la note du 24 Janvier dernier, par laquelle le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères a donné au Commissariat Ottoman l'assurance que les autorités locales ont l'ordre d'exercer, le long de la ligne de démarcation, la surveillance la plus rigoureuse et d'en éloigner tout individu qui leur paraîtrait suspect.

Depuis une dizaine d'années il existe en Bulgarie des Sociétés de Chasse et de Tir dont font également partie des officiers de l'armée active et qui fonctionnent en base de Statuts approuvés par le Ministère de l'Intérieur; mais dans ces derniers temps, il s'en est constitué de nouvelles qui, avant d'avoir obtenu la sanction administrative, ont inauguré des exercices de tir auxquels elles voulurent astreindre même les sujets Ottomans. Et c'est dans ce fait que l'on a cru voir des préparatifs d'enrôlement d'hommes exercés en vue d'une action révolutionnaire entreprise contre l'Empire! La Sublime Porte avouera qu'il faut beaucoup d'imagination pour dénaturer ainsi les faits les plus simples. Quoi qu'il en soit, à cette occasion encore, le Gouvernement Bulgare a pris les mesures nécessaires pour dissoudre les Sociétés qui poseraient des actes contraires à l'ordre public et de nature à affecter les bonnes relations existantes entre la Principauté et les pays voisins.

Mais il a été dit que le Gouvernement Princier n'est pas seulement tenu de rétablir, en leur réalité vraie, les moindres faits ou incidents qui se passent en Bulgarie. Il lui faut en outre donner des explications et dégager sa responsabilité en prévision d'événements qui pourraient surgir en Turquie.

Il est à remarquer que, depuis quelque temps, le brigandage et les assassinats, les désordres et même les plus petits incidents qui ont lieu dans les vilayets voisins sont toujours attribués à des émissaires de Comités Révolutionnaires ou à des bandes armées venues de Bulgarie. Cependant, les autorités Impériales ne peuvent jamais fournir des preuves ni des indications précises à l'appui de leurs assertions. Il suffira de rappeler la récente affaire de Ichtib; la Sublime Porte n'a pu démontrer que les perturbateurs avaient été envoyés par le Comité Macédonien de Sophia. Elle n'a pas expliqué non plus pourquoi et comment ces troubles se sont produits, ni à qui en doivent réellement incomber les responsabilités. Mais la lumière est faite aujourd'hui; tout le monde sait que, pour opérer l'arrestation d'un individu suspect, qui s'était caché dans une maison de Novo-Selo, faubourg de Ichtib, la gendarmerie et les troupes Turques envoyées sur les lieux ont brûlé plusieurs maisons, emprisonné et maltraité un grand nombre de personnes innocentes et abandonné toute une population paisible à la merci d'une horde d'Albanais Musulmans qui s'est livrée au pillage et aux pires violences. Voilà la vérité sur les " troubles " de Ichtib. Et pour donner le change a l'opinion publique en regard de pareilles répressions de troubles imaginaires, les autorités Impériales croient s'être justifiées en dénonçant les Comités Macédoniens.

La Sublime Porte n'ignore pas que, loin de vouloir défendre les Comités envers et contre tous, le Gouvernement Princier est fermement résolu de sévir contre eux au cas où ils se rendraient coupables d'actes attentatoires à l'ordre public en Bulgarie et en Turquie. Elle peut de son côté prendre à leur égard telles mesures qui lui paraîtront opportunes et justes.

Mais le Gouvernement Bulgare n'admet pas qu'on le rende par avance responsable de tout ce qui pourrait survenir dans les vilayets voisins; il s'élève énergiquement contre ce procès de tendance qui lui est fait depuis quelque temps devant l'opinion publique, à cause des Comités Macédoniens; et il dénonce à son tour les Comités Turco-Albanais qui, par les attentats et les crimes qu'ils commettent impunément dans ces provinces, répandent la terreur et l'exaspération parmi la population Bulgare. C'est dans cette funeste organisation des Comités Turco-Albanais que réside tout le mal; et le jour où la Sublime Porte prendra des mesures rigoureuses pour l'extirper et punir les coupables et qu'elle donnera la paix, la tranquillité, et le bien-être à ses populations, elle n'aura plus lieu de se préoccuper des Comités Macédoniens.

Le 5 (18) *Février*, 1901.

(Translation.)

FOR some time past, in consequence of certain reports which have reached it, the Sublime Porte has shown great anxiety regarding the activity of the Macedonian

Committees in Bulgaria, and has asked what measures the Prince's Government intend to take in order to put an end to political agitations directed against the order and security of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire which border on the Principality.

According to these reports, agents of the Committees are employing menace or force to extort money in favour of a revolutionary cause; others are publishing newspapers, convening meetings at which they excite public opinion against the Turkish authorities by the imputation of every kind of crime and atrocity, while some are organizing armed bands to commit acts of brigandage in Turkey; others again, assisted by Bulgarian officers, are drilling men with the object of teaching the use of arms to those who, at a given moment, are to form revolutionary bands and to invade the neighbouring vilayets. By all these methods, the Committees are promoting a single end, that of bringing about a general insurrection in Macedonia; and in presence of these revolutionary proceedings, the Bulgarian authorities remain inactive or powerless.

Not for the first time do His Royal Highness' Government find themselves compelled to draw attention to the deliberate exaggeration of the reports which reach the Sublime Porte and to reply to accusations devoid of foundation. Nor will it be the last time that they will have occasion to point out the inveterate habit which exists of exaggerating every occurrence in Bulgaria as well as the systematic tendency of attributing to the Bulgarian Government the responsibility for the events which have already taken place in Macedonia, and even for those which may take place in the future.

Of all the facts reported to the Sublime Porte, one alone is entirely accurate: certain agents of the Macedonian Committees have been guilty of blackmailing in order to extort money from Bulgarian subjects and foreigners. The Ministry of the Interior, however, has given the most categorical instructions to the Prefects concerning these individuals, several of whom have been arrested, and will be put on trial in accordance with Articles 330 and 333 of the Penal Code.

With regard to offences committed either through the press or by word of mouth in public meetings, the Sublime Porte must acknowledge that the Bulgarian Government have never refused, at the request of the Porte, to prosecute any persons charged with offences and outrages against His Majesty the Sultan. But if allusion is made to criticisms and attacks sometimes of a violent nature which have been published in the press or pronounced at public meetings against certain agents of the Turkish Administration, the Bulgarian Government are powerless in the matter; it rests with the Sublime Porte to prove that the abuses of authority attributed to its agents do not exist in Turkey.

As regards the armed bands who are said to be about to cross the frontier to commit acts of brigandage in the neighbouring vilayets, His Royal Highness' Government are glad to be able to declare distinctly that it is not on Bulgarian territory that such bands would attempt to assemble. Without insisting further on this point, His Royal Highness' Government confine themselves to confirming the note of the 24th January from the Bulgarian Foreign Office, in which the Ottoman Commissioner was assured that the local authorities had received instructions to exercise the most rigorous control along the line of frontier, and to remove from it any individuals who aroused suspicions.

For ten years past there have existed in Bulgaria Sporting and Rifle Clubs, to which officers on the active list belong, and which have statutes approved by the Ministry of the Interior; but in recent times new clubs have come into existence, which, before obtaining administrative sanction, have inaugurated rifle practice, in which they wish to compel even Ottoman subjects to take part. And it is this fact that has been thought to furnish proof of preparations for the enrolment of trained men with the object of a revolutionary enterprise against the Empire! The Sublime Porte will admit that it needs a considerable gift of imagination thus to distort the simplest facts. In any case, in this matter also the Bulgarian Government have taken the necessary measures for dissolving any Associations committing acts contrary to public order, and of a nature to impair the friendly relations existing between the Principality and the neighbouring dominions.

But it has been said that the Bulgarian Government is not merely called upon to explain the exact circumstances of the smallest events or incidents which take place in Bulgaria. They must, besides, offer explanations and prove that they are not responsible, in anticipation of events which may take place at some future date in Turkey.

It is noticeable that, for some time past, the brigandage and murders, the

disorders, and even the smallest incidents which have taken place in the neighbouring vilayets have always been attributed to emissaries of Revolutionary Committees, or to armed bands coming from Bulgaria. The Imperial authorities, however, are never in a position to furnish proof or precise information in support of their assertions. It will be enough to recall the recent affair at Ishtib: the Sublime Porte has never been able to prove that the agitators had been sent by the Macedonian Committee at Sophia. Nor has the Sublime Porte explained the reason of these disturbances, the manner in which they took place, or the persons upon whom the responsibility for them should really rest. But now the matter has been made clear; it is a matter of common knowledge that, in order to effect the arrest of a suspicious individual hidden in a house at Novo Selo, a suburb of Ishtib, the Turkish gendarmerie and troops sent to the spot burnt several houses, imprisoned and maltreated a large number of innocent persons, and abandoned the whole peaceable population to the mercy of a horde of Mussulman Albanians, which gave itself up to pillage and to the extremity of violence. This is the truth as to the "disturbances" at Ishtib. And to deceive public opinion in regard to such repressions of imaginary disturbances the Imperial authorities believe that they have justified themselves by denouncing the Macedonian Committees.

The Sublime Porte cannot be ignorant that, far from wishing to defend the Committees against all accusations from any quarter, the Bulgarian Government are firmly resolved to take the most rigorous measures against them in the event of their attempting to create disturbances in Bulgaria and Turkey. The Porte can, on its side, take such measures against them as may seem suitable and just.

But the Bulgarian Government cannot allow themselves to be held responsible in advance for every event which may take place in the neighbouring vilayets; they must strongly protest against the accusations of a general support of the Macedonian Committees which have for some time past been brought against them before the tribunal of public opinion, and they must, in their turn, denounce the Turco-Albanian Committees, who, by the attacks and crimes which they commit with impunity in those provinces, are spreading terror and exasperation among the Bulgarian population. It is in this mischievous organization of the Turco-Albanian Committees that all the evil lies; and when the Sublime Porte takes vigorous measures to suppress it and to punish the guilty, and thereby bestows peace, tranquillity, and well-being on its people, it will find that there is no longer cause for anxiety about the Macedonian Committees.

February 5 (18), 1901.

No. 20.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne —(*Received March* 4.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, February* 27, 1901.

IN the course of my conversation with General Petroff, reported in my preceding despatch, I congratulated his Excellency on having made a beginning of suppressing the illegal practices of the Macedonian Committee, and said I had always told his predecessors I was convinced that the exercise of a little firmness would show that organization not to be so formidable as was supposed. He said that was quite true, but that, unfortunately, as the head of a merely provisional Ministry, he could not go so far as he would have wished or do more than he had done.

I hear from one of my colleagues that General Petroff has complained that he is in some cases unable to get his orders executed. An instance of this is given in the inclosed despatch from the British Vice-Consul at Rustchuk, showing that, notwithstanding the orders of the Government, the military exercises of the local Rifle Club continue to be held, and the blackmailing of Jews and Armenians is as vigorous as ever.

In Sophia itself, Tcholakoff, the agent of the Macedonian Committee, who was convicted of the attempted murder of a Roumanian subject, is accused of firing a revolver about a fortnight ago at a Greek who refused to subscribe to the Committee's funds, but the Prefect of Police refuses to order his arrest.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Elliot.

Sir; *Rustchuk, February* 22, 1901.

THERE has lately been a considerable renewal of activity in connection with the Macedonian Committees. I am told that the Government forbade the Sunday parades for military exercises which latterly have been held beside the infantry barracks. Notwithstanding, last Sunday a parade took place, only the men assembled a good deal further away from town. The men themselves say that there are 35,000 Macedonians in Bulgaria, besides which they have 50,000 adherents amongst the Bulgarians, that makes an "army" of 80,000, and the Government have not the force to withstand them.

This, of course, is nonsense. The Government forces, though possibly not so numerous, would soon make short work of these bands, although it may be rendered more difficult owing to their having been armed and permitted to keep their "Krinkas" at home.

Last week a young Armenian, a stranger to Rustchuk, arrived and went round amongst the richer Armenian merchants, demanding in writing contributions for the Macedonian Committee. These merchants were naturally surprised to see one of their own race, and to them totally unknown, on such an errand. So he said, "Oh; you think I am unauthorized, and will perhaps make away with your money. Give me back my paper, and you will receive a visit from persons whom you will recognize as properly authenticated members of the Committee." And so it was that within a day or two well-known members of the Committee paid them visits, told them politely they were sorry to hear that they had refused to subscribe on the demand of the Armenian, and asked for so much per person, varying according to his supposed wealth. They got nothing, but in all cases but one were very politely put off on the protext of want of funds. The only one, a M. Stambolian, who flatly refused to contribute, was set upon in the street near his own house and severely beaten with a stick. The man who assaulted him, an Armenian, was seen to do it, recognized, arrested, but released the following day.

Yesterday the following persons, who are all prominent and well-known citizens, called on some Jews demanding money:—

Municipal Engineer Maltcheff, President.
Gata Zoueff, contractor, a Stoïlovist.
Aleko Yordanoff, grain merchant.
Dalmetre Konstantinoff, grain broker, Stoïlovist.

They asked the following persons to take the number of shares of 50 fr. each written against his name:—

The proprietor of a large shop, called Bon Marché, a Turkish subject, 40 shares;
Haim Calmé, banker, an Austrian subject, 100 shares;
Nassim Israel, a Greek subject, 60 shares;

and gave them three days to consider their reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

No. 21.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 4.)

My Lord, *Vienna, February* 28, 1901.

I HAD a short conversation to-day at the Foreign Department with Count Lützow on the affairs of the Balkans, and gathered from his Excellency that the Austro-Hungarian Government now consider that the danger of trouble has blown over, at all events for this spring.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 22.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 12.)

(Extract) *Sophia, March* 6, 1901.

NEDJIB EFFENDI MELHAME, the Ottoman Commissioner at Sophia, has shown me the *note verbale* which he has addressed to the Bulgarian Government in reply to theirs, of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch of the 27th ultimo. I have the honour to transmit a copy of it herewith.

Nedjib Effendi tells me that he has instructions formally and peremptorily to demand of the Bulgarian Government the dissolution of the Macedonian Committee; that he did not act on them in the time of General Petroff, being reluctant to flog a willing horse; but that now a Government has come into power which is credited with the intention of not interfering with the Committee, he shall execute them at once. I told him that I proposed to repeat to the new Minister, on the first opportunity, the representations in regard to the Macedonian Committee which I had made to General Petroff by your Lordship's instructions.

I told Nedjib Effendi that I had heard that bands were openly being recruited in the neighbourhood of Kustendil for the invasion of the frontier; he said he had the same information, and had sent to verify it. Such occurrences, however, gave him no apprehension, the Turkish forces in Macedonia being quite strong enough to deal with any disturbances either from within or from without.

The day before yesterday, the anniversary of the Treaty of San Stefano, a demonstration was made at Sophia by the Macedonian Society, a procession being organized to the monuments of the Emperor Alexander II and of the Martyr Levsky. At the latter place a speech was made by Boris Sarafoff, who eulogized those who had given their lives for the country, and called upon all present to imitate their example and prepare for the approaching struggle.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Note Verbale.

LE Commissariat Impérial a relevé avec satisfaction de la note No. 28 du Ministère Princier des Affaires Étrangères les assurances que la Principauté a bien voulu lui renouveler au sujet de l'agitation Macédonienne, ainsi que ses heureuses dispositions tendant à réprimer tous actes susceptibles d'affecter les bonnes relations de l'Empire avec la Principauté.

Toutefois ce Commissariat Impérial ne peut s'empêcher d'exprimer ses regrets de voir encore une fois le Ministère Princier revenir sur une thèse déjà détruite par ses notes précédentes et d'après laquelle les autorités Impériales prêteraient une créance aveugle aux rapports qui lui sont adressés sur les actes des révolutionnaires Macédoniens. Tous les faits signalés par ce Commissariat Impérial représentent en réalité des crimes de droit commun, presque toujours impunément commis sous le couvert de l'assistance officielle prêtée au Comité et dont le caractère patent est démontré à l'évidence dans les notes qui les signalaient. Au surplus, si les faits visés n'ont jamais été réprimés malgré les promesses réitérées des Ministères précédents, ils n'ont jamais été non plus de la part de ces Ministères l'objet d'aucune assertion de nature à les controuver ou à en atténuer la gravité.

Il est également impossible à ce Commissariat Impérial de laisser passer sans observation l'exposé que le Ministère Princier s'est plu à faire d'une question qu'il présente sous le nom de l'incident d'Ichtib, pour essayer de démontrer que les actes repréhensibles qui se commettent dans les vilayets voisins sont attribués à tort à des émissaires du Comité Révolutionnaire ou à des bandes armées venues de Bulgarie. Quoiqu'il s'agisse en l'espèce d'une affaire d'ordre intérieur spécial du Gouvernement Impérial et qu'à ce titre elle ne doit donner lieu ici à aucune explication, le Commissariat Impérial croit pouvoir affirmer cependant que si le Ministère Princier était exactement renseigné sur les circonstances de l'incident, il n'hésiterait pas à reconnaître que l'attitude du Gouvernement Impérial a été à cette occurrence tout à l'avantage des intérêts de la Principauté.

En résumé, ce Commissariat Impérial n'a en vue que la juste répression des menées subversives du Comité Révolutionnaire et des délits de droit commun dont ils

se rendent coupables; aussi veut-il espérer que les mesures arrêtées à cet effet par le Ministère Princier seront plus efficaces que celles promises par les Ministères qui l'ont précédé, et mettront enfin terme à toute agitation regrettable.

En lui donnant cette satisfaction, le Ministère Princier secondera les efforts de ce Commissariat Impérial en vue de maintenir la bonne harmonie de ses relations avec la Principauté, dont les intérêts d'ailleurs lui sont à cœur.

Le 22 Février, 1901.

(Translation.)

THE Imperial Commissioner has received with satisfaction the note No. 28 of the Bulgarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, containing renewed assurances of the Principality on the subject of the Macedonian agitation, and expressing its intention to repress all acts which might affect the good relations of the Empire with the Principality.

The Imperial Commissioner cannot, however, refrain from expressing his regret at seeing His Royal Highness' Government repeat an assertion already disproved by his previous notes, to the effect that the Imperial Authorities give blind credence to the reports addressed to him in regard to the proceedings of the Macedonian revolutionaries. All the acts to which attention has been drawn by the Commissioner are in reality crimes at common law committed nearly always with impunity under cover of the official assistance given to the Committee, the patent character of which is clearly proved in the notes calling attention to them. Further, the acts alluded to have never been followed by punishment in spite of the repeated promises of preceding Ministries, and they have not been the subject of any assertion by those Ministries tending to refute them or attenuate their gravity.

It is equally impossible for the Imperial Commissioner to pass over without observation the account which the Bulgarian Ministry has been pleased to give of a question to which it alludes as the Ishtib incident, in order to attempt to prove that the reprehensible acts which are being committed in the neighbouring vilayets are wrongly attributed to emissaries of the Revolutionary Committee, or to armed bands coming from Bulgaria. Although the Ishtib incident is a domestic matter which concerns only the Imperial Government, and therefore does not call for any explanation here, the Imperial Commissioner ventures to assert that if the Bulgarian Ministry were in possession of the exact facts of the incident it would not hesitate to admit that the attitude of the Imperial Government in regard to it was entirely to the advantage of the interests of the Principality.

To resume, the Imperial Commissioner has only in view the just punishment of the subversive proceedings of the Revolutionary Committee, and of the offences against the common law of which it is guilty; he accordingly trusts that the measures taken with that object by His Royal Highness' Government will be more effectual than those promised by preceding Bulgarian Administrations, and will at last put an end to all this regrettable agitation.

By giving him this satisfaction the Bulgarian Government will assist the efforts of the Imperial Commissioner to maintain the harmonious character of his relations with the Principality, the interests of which he has at heart.

February 22, 1901.

No. 23.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 12.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, March* 9, 1901.

M. DANEFF, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, held his first reception this morning. In conversation with me, after the exchange of a few preliminary phrases, he at once broached the Macedonian question, and stated in the strongest possible terms the firm determination of the new Government not to suffer the continuance of the Macedonian Committee as a power within the State, nor to allow it either to molest the inhabitants of the Principality or to imperil the relations of Bulgaria with neighbouring countries.

I told his Excellency that it gave me great pleasure to hear his declaration; that I had been about to make to him the same representation I had made to his predecessor

by your Lordship's order, and that I trusted the influence of the Bulgarian Government would be exerted to restrain the criminal proceedings of the Committee outside as well as inside the Principality.

He said it was a mistake to suppose that the Sophia Committee is responsible for everything that is done in Macedonia, but he thought that its action there would be considerably modified by the measures of the Government here. I said that Boris Sarafoff's recent language did not show any sign of diminishing vehemence; to which M. Daneff replied that if he meant business he would not speak so loud.

His Excellency declared that it was perfectly untrue that his party had received the support of the Macedonians at the elections; and with regard to Dr. Radeff, the Minister of Justice, he said that he had been a member of the Macedonian Committee, and temporarily President of it, at a time when its policy was very different from what it has since become, and that he is thoroughly in agreement with his colleagues as to the necessity of keeping it in its place.

M. Daneff said that while the attitude of the Bulgarian Government is dictated, not by pressure from without, but by a firm conviction of what is demanded by the true interests of the country, he trusts that it will receive recognition from the Powers, and that their Representatives at Constantinople, and especially His Majesty's Ambassador, will insist upon improvements in the administration of Macedonia and the condition of its inhabitants. I replied that British Representatives, while warning the Turkish Government against the danger of allowing the spread of revolutionary movements, have never failed at the same time to insist on the necessity of introducing reforms, and of not confounding the innocent with the guilty.

On leaving M. Daneff I called upon M. Sarafoff, the Minister of the Interior, who spoke in a similar strain.

No. 24.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 12.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, March* 9, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith Mr. Elliot's despatch of the 6th instant, which reached me this morning under flying seal, and, in connection therewith, I beg to inclose a short abstract of a Return published in the "Information" to-day, showing how immense is the proportion of officers, employés, &c., who are born Macedonians, and how much influence, therefore, they exercise directly on the Government and administration of the Principality.

My attention was called to this article to-day by the Bulgarian Agent in explanation and excuse of the attitude of his Government towards the Macedenian Committee; but he maintained that the present Cabinet at Sophia, in spite of the divergent elements of which it is composed, would be just as earnest as the late Petroff Cabinet in calming, as far as lay in their power, the effervescence of the Macedonians.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Précis of an Article in "Information" of March 8, 1901.

STATISTICAL information regarding the number of Macedonians living in Bulgaria throws fresh light on the Macedonian question.

According to the last Census the population of the Principality amounts to 3,580,000, and there has been an increase of 600,000 since the Census in 1890. This increase is mostly due to immigration from Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople.

These immigrants came with nothing but their knowledge of various trades, in which they compete with Bulgarians. Twenty thousand Macedonians have settled in Sophia, 8,000 in Philippopoli, and in other towns the numbers of Macedonian settlers is proportionately great. Statistics show that one-third of the officers of the Bulgarian army are Macedonians.

There are 2,300 Macedonians among 86,000 Bulgarian school-teachers, and 15,000 Macedonians among 38,000 officials. Four of the eight Metropolitans are Macedonians

by birth, and of a total of 3,412 popes, 1,262 are Macedonians. In fact, the Bulgarian born meets at every step a Macedonian who competes with him for his office or means of existence.

Further, 200 or 300 Macedonian students come yearly to Bulgaria from the schools of the Exarchate in search of fortune. It is thus clear that the Macedonian question has long ceased to be a mere question of politics for Bulgaria. It is rather a question of internal economics.

The Bulgarians appeal to Europe, therefore, to give the Macedonians reform—autonomy—a Kingdom or a Republic, no matter which, so long as they can go back to their own country—they came to seek for freedom and have taken the Bulgarian's bread out of his mouth. Europe must listen to these appeals sooner or later, as no power on earth could prevent the Macedonian officer, soldier, teacher from crossing the frontier were an insurrection to break out.

This is the common cry of all Bulgarian parties whose mouth-pieces, the various editors, are Macedonians.

No. 25.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 18.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, March* 14, 1901.

I AM indebted to the Secretary-General for the following account of an affray which occurred on the 2nd March between Albanian brigands and the Turkish troops, which, in the opinion of the Servian Consul at Pristina, who reported the occurrence, will have a great effect on the brigands of that country, and will insure peace for some months to come.

It appears that a certain Bosniac, who had assassinated the son of Mustapha Beg, took refuge with Ibrahim Meshmed Redgic, a well-known brigand, in a fortified medieval tower situated near Ipek, on the road to a monastery known as La Patriarchie. Mustapha Beg applied for assistance at Ipek, and Suleiman Pasha, the newly-appointed Military Governor, sent a considerable force, including some pieces of artillery with which the tower was surrounded and the defenders summoned to surrender. This they refused to do and opened fire on the besiegers from behind a fortified wall.

After an engagement which lasted for two and a-half hours, the tower could no longer resist the artillery and Ibrahim surrendered.

The Turkish soldiery, who were exasperated by the resistance they had encountered, took Ibrahim, the Bosniac assassin, and two remaining brigands, and shot them at the Bairam Aga Fountain. Ibrahim's body was taken to Ipek. The loss on the part of the Turks was two soldiers killed and two wounded.

Ibrahim is described as being the head of the tribe of Rougova, and one of the most formidable brigands in that district. The energy displayed by Suleiman Pasha is greatly praised.

It is to be hoped that the view taken of the situation by the Servian Consul at Pristina may not be too sanguine, and that one of the more immediate impediments to the maintenance of peace in the Turkish provinces may have been removed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 26.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 20, 1901.

THE Turkish Ambassador made the following communication to me to-day:—

The Porte was informed that certain papers in Europe have for some time published exaggerated reports with regard to the situation in the European provinces of Turkey. Such sensational stories are absolutely without any foundation, inasmuch as, in consequence of measures taken by the Imperial authorities, order and public security continue to be maintained in those provinces. It is true that a few Bulgarian ringleaders have endeavoured to create disturbances in one or two places, such as Ishtib and Ghevgheli; but they have been arrested at once, and they will appear before the Courts to be dealt with according to law.

Anthopoulo Pasha added that a report from the Head of the Police at Salonica contained some interesting details and particulars on the situation in Macedonia. From revolutionary papers seized amongst documents which had belonged to the Central Bulgaro-Macedonian Committee, and on the very confession of prisoners whose names are in the possession of the Police Inspector, Niazi Bey, twenty-seven suspected persons were arrested in the district of Calcachan, and nineteen others were imprisoned in the Caza of Ghevgheli, the leaders of the rebellion being professors and priests. Rifles were discovered not only in the possession of the accused, but also in the hands of some Bulgarians killed during various affrays; and, besides, nine Gras rifles and nine Russian magazine rifles, with 380 cartridges, were found in two different places at the village of Sermelli (Caza of Ghevgheli), and in another village named Kertoh (Caza of Calcachan) seven Gras rifles and one Russian magazine rifle, with 247 cartridges, were discovered.

As the Chief of the Ottoman Police reports that the most stringent measures have been taken with the view of proceeding to a further search, it is most likely that new discoveries of arms and ammunition will take place.

His Excellency said that he was instructed to point out the fact that the Imperial troops, acting on the orders of their Chiefs, have behaved, and are behaving, with the greatest calmness and prudence in connection with the late occurrences in Macedonia, and have refrained from any undue severity.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 27.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 21, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica, reporting on the seizure of a quantity of ammunition at Uskub, and stating that he has reason to believe that rifles and cartridges are being secretly imported by Albanians for sale to the Bulgarians in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 27.

Acting Consul-General Freeman to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, March 8, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Fontana, reporting the seizure at Uskub of some thousands of cartridges, which appear to have been intended for sale among the anti-Christian Albanians of Dibra, or else—and, in Mr. Fontana's opinion, less probably—among the Bulgarians in the neighbourhood of Uskub.

Whatever the destination of the particular cartridges in question, I have good reason to believe that rifles and ammunition are being secretly sold to Bulgarians in the suspected districts by Albanians, who find the trade profitable, and there is no doubt that by this and other means the inhabitants are gradually becoming armed. I have been positively assured by a person who has just returned from the neighbourhood, and whose information may be safely relied on, that drilling takes place regularly at a village in the Koursha Balkan, to the north-west of Kilkitch. My informant is convinced that this is but a sample of the secret proceedings all over the disaffected area, which may be said to comprise the districts of Koumanovo, Ishtib, Radovitch, Kieuprulu (Veles), Perlepe, Ghevgheli, Doiran, Kilkitch, Stroumitsa, Nevrokop, and Razlog. The inhabitants appear to be in an expectant and nervous state of mind, and, in spite of the increase in blackmailing by emissaries of the Macedonian Committee, are more in sympathy with them than with the Turkish authorities. But though they are waiting for a blow to be struck, they are still, as far as I can gather, unwilling to strike it themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. G. FREEMAN.

March 9, 1901.

P.S.—I have just been informed that fifteen fire-arms of various patterns, and two cases of cartridges, were found on the 7th instant by the Kaïmakam of the Caza of Avret-Hissar buried in the ground in a farm belonging to a certain Suleiman Bey at Kalabak, K'rtchova. One of the rifles is said to be that of a zaptieh who left Salonica on service some two months ago, and has never been heard of since.

F. G. F.

Inclosure 2 in No. 27.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Acting Consul-General Freeman.

Sir, *Uskub, February* 27, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that two days ago four Albanians driving a pack-horse carrying a large box were stopped whilst passing the Governor-General's private residence by the guards on duty there. The box was opened and found to contain many thousand Martini cartridges. The Albanians were thereupon arrested, but as they were proceeding under escort towards the police-station two of them managed to slip away and escape as far as the railway bridge of the Zibeftché line, about a mile from the Vali's house. They were hotly pursued by their guards, who were soon after followed by a number of zaptiehs and soldiers. Upon reaching the bridge the Albanians ensconced themselves under partial cover and opened fire on their pursuers from two Martini rifles they had carried hidden under their great-coats. The fire was returned by the troops and gendarmes, who did not, however, attempt to rush the Albanians' position. Hundreds of shots were exchanged, until at length one of the fugitives was shot through the thighs, whereupon both the men surrendered and were recaptured.

A Martini rifle was found in possession of each of the two Albanians previously arrested concealed beneath their overcoats. The four men were Albanians of Dibra, and it is understood that they had purchased the arms and ammunition in Bulgaria, and had reached Uskub from the Bulgarian frontier.

At Dibra the Albanian Notables are endeavouring, I hear, to convoke a Congress of Albanians from different parts of Albania to discuss the measures to be taken to suppress any possible general rising on the part of Bulgarians in Macedonia in the spring. Envoys have been sent to various Albanian towns in the north of this vilayet to invite representative Albanians to take part in the Congress referred to. At Prisrend, however, the Beys and Notables appeared to have refused to participate in or have anything to do with it.

It is thought that the cartridges brought by the four Dibra Albanians to Uskub may have been destined for sale to the Bulgarians in this neighbourhood. It is more reasonable, perhaps, to surmise that the cartridges were intended for sale among Albanians at Dibra or elsewhere, perhaps, with a view to fotward the ends for which the Congress alluded to is contemplated. The Dibra Albanians hold the reputation of a lawless, fanatical, and anti-Christian community, and the Martini rifle is their more usual fire-arm, excluding the revolver. The weapons imported of late months by the Committee for distribution among the Bulgarians in these parts are alleged to be of the Männlicher system, and cannot fire Martini cartridges.

In a long conversation yesterday with the Bulgarian Agent here, M. Payeff informed me that he felt assured that the arms and ammunition taken from the four Albanians were not meant to be sold to Bulgarians, as the traffic in cartridges was one of long standing among the Albanians. He went on to say that he saw no reason for the time being to apprehend any serious revolutionary movement in this vilayet on the part of the Bulgarians, or any motive for the rumoured Congress at Dibra; that the language held to the Sultan regarding Macedonian matters by their Excellencies His Majesty's Ambassador and the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, as reported in the Bulgarian newspapers, had produced a favourable impression among educated Bulgarians in this district, whereas that of the Russian Ambassador had created the apprehension that whatever treatment calculated to crush Bulgarian aspirations were applied to the Bulgarian rayahs—were it even massacre—would meet with Russian indifference, if not approval; and that such apprehension might, under certain circumstances, lead to exasperation, the result of which it would be painful to predict.

It is, in my humble opinion, to be feared that any immediate and vigorous attempt to stamp out in this vilayet the train laid by Committee agents in the various cazas where Bulgarians are numerous by the arrest and punishment of those agents of whom there are said to be four in every such caza, might not improbably lead to a result very different from that hoped for—might, in fact, ignite the fuse; and in any case the aspirations for years inculcated in the numerous Bulgarian schools, and the work of the Committees, would not, I think, be greatly weakened or for long trammelled thereby. Whilst Bulgarian schools, as they are at present conducted, and local misgovernment, continue to exist, Bulgarian rayah discontent and stubborn desire for independence cannot fail to increase.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 28.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 26, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, stating that the account given by the "Mail," on the authority of a Vienna newspaper, as to the situation at Kossovo, is entirely erroneous.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 28.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Acting Consul-General Freeman.

Sir, *Uskub, March* 20, 1901.

I HAVE the honour herewith to inclose a cutting from an article headed "The Macedonian Agitation," which appeared in the "Mail" of the 11th March, 1901, dealing with a letter from Uskub published in the Vienna "Information."

The statements made in the letter in question are entirely erroneous. The Turkish soldiery are committing no excesses in this province. The ordinary garrison occupies Uskub, as heretofore and their behaviour is perfectly satisfactory. Neither the Turkish Commandant nor the Colonel of Gendarmerie have imprisoned any respectable citizen. No shop is shut, and none have been pillaged except, the Bulgarian Agent assures me, two or three at Ishtib subsequent to the Bulgarian disorders there (reported in my despatch of the 20th January last). The names of the owners of the shops he refers to are, however, unknown to him. The peasants in the neighbouring villages are fleeing nowhere, nor has any brutality on the part of the troops taken place. The Servians hope that a stop will be put to the Bulgarian Committee's propaganda, and are making no outcry whatsoever. The Russian Consul receives very few applications for help, and, as a rule, unhesitatingly does what he can to support any reasonable application, be the applicant Servian, Bulgarian, or Mussulman, though he of course, in a general way, extends his help and countenance to the Servian rather than to any other local community. The Bulgarian Agent and Servian Consul-General have no more reason than heretofore to complain of the Vali's method of treating their representations. The Governor-General, I understand, is ready to do what he can in the limits of the powers accorded to him. The Turkish troops are under complete control, and Nouri Pasha's word is law among them. Nouri Pasha is a distinguished officer and a man of high character.

Further advice from Uskub, published by the "Information," state that "The Turks are committing veritable atrocities in the way of extortion and the abduction of Christian girls." This is untrue, no case of abduction of a Christian girl or woman having reached the ears either of the Austrian, Russian, or British Consul during the last two months.

The situation throughout the vilayet is outwardly, at least, tranquil, and the Turkish authorities are endeavouring to prevent trouble. The south and south-eastern districts of Kossovo are situated within the crater formed by the Bulgarian

Revolutionary Committee, and it is impossible to foresee what may suddenly occur therein. But at present there are no real premonitory signs of an eruption shortly to be expected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 28.

Extract from the "Mail" of March 11, 1901.

THE news-sheet, the "Information," publishes an interesting letter from Uskub, in Macedonia, which, even if all the statements it contains be not rigorously in accordance with facts, testifies, at all events, to the continued unrest in that part of the Baikan peninsula. The writer says that the Turkish soldiery are committing excesses in every direction. They not only occupy the town of Uskub itself, but all the surrounding localities. The Turkish Commander, in concert with the chief of the local gendarmerie, is imprisoning and ill-treating respectable citizens. Many of the shops are shut, having been plundered by the troops. In consequence of the brutality of the soldiers, the peasants in the neighbouring villages are fleeing to Servia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria. The news that the suppression of the revolutionary movemen has been instigated by Russia produces general consternation. The people say tha they are abandoned by the Czar, who does not care what becomes of them. Thousan of Macedonians of both the Slav nationalities join in this outcry. The Russian Consul at Uskub is overwhelmed with applications for help, but is observing a strictly neutral attitude. The Bulgarian Agent and the Servian Consul have repeatedly called the attention of the Vali to the ill-treatment of their compatriots, but without obtaining redress. The answer was that the Vali must carry out the instructions of his Government, and could not tolerate any interference. It is, however, necessary to add that the Vali himself is unable to enforce the law. The Turkish soldiers under Nouri Pasha no longer obey his orders.

No. 29.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 26, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report that Nedjib Effendi Melhame, the Ottoman Commissioner, some days ago addressed to the Bulgarian Government a formal note demanding the dissolution of the Macedonian Committee in the interest of the maintenance of good relations between the Principality and the Porte, and is awaiting a reply.

I did not attend the last reception of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, but his Excellency told one of my colleagues, and begged him to repeat that the Government were determined to strike at the root of the evil produced by the Macedonian Committee, and were only waiting to act until they had collected the necessary materials.

I am told by a Deputy that, in closing the debate on the Address in the Sobranié yesterday, the same Minister, M. Daneff, said that the Government were determined to enforce the law, and to fulfil their obligations towards other countries, for until they had put themselves in the right in that respect, they were not entitled to ask other countries to fulfil their engagements (alluding to the eventual execution of Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin). He added that so long as the Macedonian Committee conformed to the law, it could continue to exist, but that any breach of the law would be rigorously punished. The question of the complicity of the Committee in the Bucharest murders was now in the hands of the Courts of Justice, and would, he hoped, soon be finally settled.

The Macedonian Congress was summoned to meet at Sophia on the 31st March, but the Government are said to be throwing obstacles in the way of its assembling by refusing leave of absence to schoolmasters and other public servants who have been chosen as provincial delegates to it; and an evening paper announced yesterday that the meeting of the Congress had been postponed until July. The principal business of the Congress would have been to consider the resignation of Sarafoff

and other members of the Committee, and to re-elect them or appoint others in their place.

Mr. Vice-Consul Dalziel reports from Rustchuk that the drilling of Macedonians has ceased, and that the authorities profess to be calling in the rifles, but say it is difficult to do so, as they are mostly private property.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Philippopoli writes that "the Macedonians are carrying on their drill as usual, sometimes with rifles, and always under the direction of garrison officers."

M, Daneff told me the last time I saw him that several known leaders of bands of incursionists had been removed from the neighbourhood of the frontier and "internés" elsewhere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 30.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 31, 1901.

I HAVE received a telegram from the British Acting Consul-General at Salonica reporting that he is credibly informed that a collision has occurred in Turkish territory near Juma between Turkish troops and a band of about thirty Bulgarians. The latter were caught in an ambuscade. Ten of them were killed, the rest escaping across the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 31.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 8.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 2, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, through Mr. Acting Consul-General Freeman at Salonica, reporting the occurrence at Ipek of a fight between a party of Albanians and the troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Acting Consul-General Freeman.

Sir, *Uskub, March* 22, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that a conflict occurred some days ago near Ipek between a band of Albanians and a strong force of troops belonging to the garrison there. The fight ensued upon an attempt on the part of the soldiers to arrest certain Albanians who had refused to obey when summoned to appear before the authorities at Ipek. Twelve Albanians were killed and wounded, and, on the side of the Turks, one officer and two privates were, it appears, mortally wounded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 32.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 9.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 30, 1901.

IN October last I had the honour to transmit copies of notes addressed by the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Roumanian Agent, in which, among

other things, it was stated that proceedings would be taken against Murjieff, a delegate of the Macedonian Committee, who was accused of extorting money by threats from Roumanian subjects at Sophia.

The trial took place on the 26th and 27th instant, and resulted in the acquittal of the prisoner. He was defended by an array of counsel representing every political party in the State, including that of the Government in office—a significant demonstration, if not of the sympathy with which the Macedonian Committee is regarded, at any rate of the influence which it possesses.

I have the honour to inclose a summary of the proceedings in Court. The opening speech of the Public Prosecutor, which has not been reported in any newspaper, appears to have been an argument in favour of, rather than against, the prisoner. I am told he actually declared in Court that it was the duty of every Bulgarian to subscribe to the Macedonian Patriotic Loan. His deputy, however, who closed the case for the prosecution on the second day of the trial, presented it properly.

M. Daneff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressed to me this morning great mortification at the result of the trial. He said it was unfortunate that it had not been delayed until the attitude of the present Government towards the Macedonian Committee had been generally realized. When the witnesses made their depositions before the Juge d'Instruction they were afraid to speak out, and at the trial they only repeated their former evidence. The Government had not liked to interfere with the management of the case by the "Parquet," but they now saw they had made a mistake in leaving it in the hands of a Procureur who had been appointed by their predecessors, and who had now been dismissed on account of the manner in which he had acted. The case would be taken before the Court of Appeal, where it was hoped a conviction would be obtained.

I said to M. Daneff that the result of the trial had produced a very bad impression, and that if the influence of the Macedonian Committee was sufficient to secure the acquittal of one of their minor officials, such as Murjieff, there did not appear to be much chance of the conviction of their President, Sarafoff, when he is brought to trial.

His Excellency said he understood that there is documentary evidence against Sarafoff which is conclusive.

The acquittal of Murjieff appears to have produced greater activity among the agents of the Macedonian Committee, for several Greek subjects have complained to their Agent that demands of money were made of them immediately after the trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 32.

Summary of the Trial of Atanas Murjieff, on the charge of extorting Money from certain Roumanian Subjects at Sophia, March 26 and 27, 1901.

MURJIEFF described himself as 29 years old, born at Prilep, in Macedonia, of the Orthodox faith, now living at Sophia, and a delegate of the chief Macedonian Committee.

The "acte d'accusation" alleged that early in July last Murjieff went to Alexis Tsovaroff, a hotel and bar-keeper, and extorted from him by threats 500 fr. in cash and a bill of 1,500 fr. for the funds of the Macedonian Committee; and that he also extorted 2,000 fr. from the merchant Nicholas Karaja. Tsovaroff and Karaja complained to the Roumanian Agency, at whose request proceedings were taken against Murjieff.

In examination, Murjieff pleaded not guilty, and stated that he had asked for money, not only of Tsovaroff and Karaja, but of all Macedonians residing at Sophia, demanding it for the Macedonian Committee in return for bonds of the Macedonian Patriotie Loan for the liberation of Macedonia. He had in no instance employed force. He had gone several times to the brothers Tsovaroff for money, but as they would not believe that he was a delegate of the Committee, he had been obliged to take M. Kovacheff, the Secretary, with him; whereupon they signed a bill for 1,500 fr. to the order of the President, Boris Sarafoff, and two days later they brought 500 fr. in cash to the office, receiving a receipt for the money and the bonds. He said that it was not true that the Committee fixed the sum each person was

to give; each gave what he liked, and the brothers Tsovaroff voluntarily gave 2,000 fr. Upon Karaja learning what Murjieff wanted, he gave him 1,000 fr. at once, and promised another 1,000 fr. in a few days. Murjieff declared that he had never threatened anybody, nor said that those who did not give would be entered in the Black Book. He had, moreover, heard from Kovacheff that Tsovaroff had been to the office, and had given the names of several of his countrymen who would be glad to subscribe.

Alexis Tsovaroff deposed that he was born at Malovishte, in Macedonia, and was a Roumanian subject, although neither he nor his father had ever been in Roumania. Delegates of the Macedonian Committee had frequently been to him to demand money.

In November 1899 two of them demanded 500 fr.; he offered 100 fr., which they refused. In the following January the same men came with another and demanded 5,000 fr. After these men had been to him several times without getting anything from him Murjieff came, and by threats extorted from him 500 fr. in cash and a bill to the order of Boris Sarafoff for 1,500 fr. Murjieff threatened his life and showed him a dagger. The witness, however, admitted that he had at first deposed that he was not afraid of Murjieff, and only gave the money to avoid a row, but he now said that he gave the money from fear.

Naoum Tsovaroff, brother of the last witness, was absent in 1899, but was told what had happened by his brother on his return.

On the 5th July last Murjieff came to their place of business, went into the bedroom, called Alexis, and told him he must give money or he would not leave the room alive. He demanded 3,000 fr. for the Macedonian Committee. At the request of Alexis, Naoum Tsovaroff fetched a certain Youkoff, at whose intercession Murjieff reduced his demand by 1,000 fr., but as neither of the Tsovaroffs knew Murjieff, they sent for a member of the Macedonian Committee. Kovacheff appeared, and Alexis then promised 2,000 fr. in cash and bills.

D. Y. Julamila deposed that last July Murjieff came to him and required him to take 3,000 fr. worth of bonds of the Macedonian Patriotic Loan. Not being willing to give as much, witness went to the President, Sarafoff, who, however, would not abate the demand, and witness was obliged to give 1,000 fr. in cash and a bill for the balance. Murjieff's manner gave witness the impression that something unpleasant would happen to him if he did not pay. He had always contributed voluntarily to the Macedonian cause, and there was no ground for Murjieff's behaviour.

N. D. Karaja stated that delegates of the Macedonian Committee had often looked for him, but he had suceeeded in concealing himself. They had declared that he would be made away with if he did not give. In July Murjieff came to him and in the name of the Committee demanded 6,000 fr., which he eventually reduced to 4,000 fr. Witness gave 1,000 fr. in cash and three bills of 1,000 fr. each, one of which he had already redeemed. Murjieff himself did not use threats.

Y. Youkoff contradicted M. Tsovaroff's evidence as to his having interceded to obtain a reduction of Tsovaroff's contribution.

K. Mustrikoff did not know Murjieff, but said other persons had been to him and demanded money under threats of being entered in the Black Book. Afterwards he himself joined the Macedonian Society.

Other witnesses (who had complained to the Roumanian Agency) declared that no money had ever been demanded of them by Murjieff or any one else.

V. Kovacheff, Secretary of the Macedonian Committee, stated that in July he was called to the Tsovaroff's place of business, where he found Murjieff discoursing about the Patriotic Loan. He joined in the conversation, and explained the object of the loan, saying that every Macedonian, without distinction of nationality, must contribute towards the liberation of Macedonia. Tsovaroff caught his enthusiasm and said he would give 2,000 fr., and he did so. When he came to the office to pay the money he made no complaint of Murjieff, and expressly declared that he gave the money voluntarily. The Committee had never fixed the amount of the bonds to be purchased by each person.

Two witnesses, who were in Tsovaroff's place of business when Murjieff came there, deposed that the latter used no violence.

Three witnesses, who were in the office of the Committee when Alexis Tsovaroff paid the money, testified that he spoke enthusiastically of the idea of liberation, and gave the names of several of his countrymen who would be glad to buy bonds.

Three witnesses deposed that Karaja gave money to Murjieff, but that they were not aware that the latter had used force.

The Deputy Public Prosecutor described the objects of the Macedonian Committee, and said that the evidence showed that force had been employed in placing the bonds of the liberation loan. The witnesses who had stated that Tsovaroff and Karaja gave of their own free will were not credible. He contended that the charge against Murjieff was proved, and demanded his conviction.

M. Theodoroff (who was Minister of Finance in M. Stoïloff's Cabinet), one of Murjieff's counsel, maintained that the witnesses for the defence were as credible as the plaintiffs. From the evidence of the witnesses for the prosecution, the Public Prosecutor drew the conclusion that Murjieff had extorted money by force. If there was any question of force it could only be of moral, not physical force, and the employment of moral force was not punishable by law. It was true that the brothers Tsovaroff had given money, but they gave it freely, no doubt not from patriotic motives but because others had done the same. That Karaja gave of his own free will was proved by his own evidence as well as that of several others.

Another of the counsel for the defence argued that even if Murjieff really said to Alexis Tsovaroff that one of them would not leave the room alive, that could not be interpreted to be the employment of force within the meaning of the law. It was not to be believed that Tsovaroff gave from fear, for his attitude in the Court showed that he even attacked the members of the Macedonian Committee itself without fear of the consequences.

After several hours' deliberation the Court found the charges not proved, and acquitted the prisoner.

No. 33.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 9.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 30, 1901.

I RECEIVED yesterday from Mr. Vice-Consul Dalziel a despatch reporting that on Sunday, the 24th, the Macedonians recommenced drilling at the usual place outside Rustchuk, but that they did not carry arms through the town, having previously left them at the Club house. I mentioned this to-day to M. Daneff, who took a note of it, saying that the Government had not received any report on the subject from the Prefect.

His Excellency said that an Army Order had been issued forbidding officers on the active list to have any connection whatever with the Macedonian Societies.

The "Reformi," the organ of the Macedonian Committee, states that the meeting of the Congress is postponed until the 17th instant, during the Orthodox Easter holidays. It says that the Congress will be called upou to take decisions of the last importance for the future of Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 34.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 15.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 8, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th February, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of two despatches which I have received from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica, reporting on the trial of the Bulgarians accused of high treason in connection with the recent incident at Ghevgheli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 34.

Acting Consul-General Freeman to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, March* 21, 1901.

MR. SHIPLEY informed your Excellency, in his despatch of the 23rd ultimo, that a number of Macedonian Bulgarians had been arrested on suspicion of conspiring to establish a new form of government in Macedonia.

On the 11th instant Dr. Tatarchef and eighteen others of those so arrested were put on their trial before the Criminal Court of Appeal of Salonica, charged under Articles 56 and 58 of the Penal Code* with "organizing a revolutionary force against the Ottoman Government with the object of establishing in Macedonia an autonomous Government or bringing about the annexation of the country to Bulgaria, by inducing the inhabitants to join the Macedonian Committee, supplying them with arms, and stirring up their minds by articles in the 'Reformi,' a revolutionary Bulgarian newspaper, and by secret verbal instructions."

Inclosure 2 in No. 34.

Acting Consul-General Freeman to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, April* 1, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 26th instant, acquainting your Excellency with the result of the trial of the nineteen Bulgarian Macedonians on a charge of high treason, and to inclose herewith a summary of the proceedings in Court.

These proceedings can hardly be looked upon as satisfactory as far as the method employed in them is concerned. Owing, however, to the customary reference to the Court of Cassation, the final stage is not likely to be reached for some time yet.

The object of the prosecution of these men was, undoubtedly, their condemnation, and it has been kept in sight throughout the trial to the exclusion of all other considerations. The composition of the Criminal Court of Appeal of Salonica is not a happy one, and it was made worse by the absence, through illness, of the President, Shevki Bey, the only member of it with any legal training. His place was taken by Sami Effendi, an honest, rich, uneducated, Turk, with the following Assistant Judges and Assessors: Memlouk Bey, a Turk of ill-repute; Ibrahim Bey, a deunmé (Mussulman of Jewish origin); Sossides, a Greek raya, broker, and tobacco merchant; and Abastado, a bankrupt Jew. The Deputy Public Prosecutor, Nejmedin Bey, who had the entire control of the case in his hands, is said to be a man of integrity, experience, and technical knowledge. He conducted the case with eloquence, and evinced a thorough acquaintance with the facts, though not much skill, perhaps, in handling the evidence.

It is generally believed here that, in addition to instructions ordering an active campaign against Bulgarians suspected of treasonable intrigue, &c., the sentences to be passed on the prisoners had also arrived direct from Yildiz; and that the throwing open

* "Art. 56. Quiconque aura excité la guerre civile en portant les habitants de l'Empire Ottoman à s'armer les uns contre les autres, ou à porter la dévastation, le massacre, et le pillage dans un ou plusieurs endroits, sera puni de mort, si l'attentat a été suivi d'effet ou s'il a reçu un commencement d'exécution."

"Art. 58. Dans le cas où une entente secrète a été formée entre deux ou plusieurs personnes ayant pour but un des crimes mentionnés ci-dessus ou l'un des complots prévus dans les Articles 55 et 56; si après l'entente et la résolution de procéder à l'exécution du complot arrêté, il y a eu des actes entrepris pour en préparer l'exécution, les coupables seront punis de la détention perpétuelle dans une enceinte fortifiée. Si le complot projeté n'a été suivi d'aucun acte propre à en préparer l'exécution et s'il n'y a eu que résolution d'agir concertée et arrêtée, les individus qui auront fait partie du complot seront punis de la détention à temps dans une enceinte fortifiée. S'il y a eu proposition faite et non agréée de former un complot pour arriver à l'un des crimes ci-dessus énoncés, celui qui aura fait une telle proposition sera puni d'un emprisonnement d'un an à trois ans."

* TRANSLATION.—"Art. 56. Whoever causes civil war by inciting the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire to take up arms against each other, or to devastate, massacre, or pillage in any place or places, shall be punished with death, if the attempt has been carried out or if a commencement has been made of carrying it out."

"Art. 58. In the case of a secret understanding being arrived at between two or more persons having for its object one of the crimes mentioned above or one of the plots referred to in Articles 55 and 56, if, after the understanding and the resolve to proceed to carry out the plot which has been formed, acts have taken place with a view to preparing for the execution of the plot, the guilty parties shall be punished with imprisonment for life in a fortified place. If the projected plot has not been followed by any act of such a character as to constitute a preparation for its execution and if there has only been a concerted and adopted resolution to act, the persons who have taken part in the plot shall be punished with a term of imprisonment in a fortified place. If a proposal to form a plot to commit one of the crimes specified above has been made and has not been agreed to, the person who made such proposal shall be punished with imprisonment for a term of from one year to three years."

of the doors of the Court, contrary to general expectation, to the general public was merely a politic but meaningless concession to European ideas. The really important part of the trial was the preliminary investigation by the examining Magistrate, which was conducted in private. The Bulgarians had on their arrest been lodged in separate cells, and they were for the most part examined singly. It was, therefore, impossible for them to have agreed upon a common system of defence, and their statements to the examining Magistrate would in consequence be of far greater importance than the replies which they gave at the public trial. It was, indeed, on their first statements, apparently, that they were condemned. How those statements were obtained; whether they were really made by the prisoners; whether, as the latter declare, the Magistrate inserted in the so-called depositions answers which were never given and questions that were never asked; whether the police forced the accused to sign documents of the contents of which they were not made cognizant; these are points the elucidation of which would prove of far greater value to the just appreciation of the whole question than anything which occurred at the trial. The prisoners affirm that they were subjected to treatment little short of torture, that answers were put in their mouths by the police and forced from them by beatings; and in the open Court, where they were no longer in danger of such ill-treatment, they repudiated the depositions (which they had signed) as a tissue of lies. The only answer the Public Prosecutor could make to the charge against the police was the question why they had not informed him of the treatment to which they had been subjected; and in not one case was a medical examination ordered, to verify or disprove the charge then and there.

The public trial was an empty form. The depositions made, or supposed to have been made, by the prisoners, were read by the Clerk of the Court and denied by the prisoners. The seven days were practically taken up with denials. The less educated of the accused confined themselves to a more or less intelligent, but complete, denial of their previous statements; the better educated pointed out, with a considerable show of truth, that they were being condemned, as they had been arrested, on mere suspicion; for their fellow prisoners, whose evidence was supposed to confirm suspicion, were cutting the ground from under the feet of the prosecution by their denials. Dr. Tatarchef, against whom there seems to have been really no conclusive evidence, disputed the right of the Court to throw the onus of disproof on the accused. He maintained that as the Court had preferred certain more or less vague charges against them, it was the business of the prosecution to prove them, and that in this it had failed.

The particulars of the evidence are all much the same in each case, the seizure of seditious papers in the house of Lazaroff being, in my humble opinion, the only fact clearly proved. The discovery of arms and ammunition in small quantities is one which could be made in most houses and on most persons in this country; and the fact that a man carries two revolvers scarcely proves him to be a more dangerous person than another who only carries one.

The Public Prosecutor may have had conclusive legal proof of the guilt of each man, but if he had he did not produce it. Possibly the near approach of Baïram had some influence on the length of a trial on the issue of which hung the lives of nineteen men.

Mr. Consular Assistant Shipley has pointed out to me the remarkable repetition of history which the evidence brought to light in the course of the trial. In 1867 the Irish Fenians issued bonds in America redeemable six months after the acknowledgment of the independence of the Irish nation.

In 1897 the Bulgarian Committee circulated shares in a loan to be repaid after the autonomy of Macedonia had been assured. One of the persons arrested in Salonica last month, and presumably awaiting his trial when the Court sits again after Baïram, is said to have had in his safe two bonds for 1,000 fr. each "redeemable on the deliverance of Macedonia."

On the evidence then produced in Court the verdict and sentences appear to be unjust, and it is only one more proof of the futility of the public trial that there is hardly any doubt as to their justice. Most people here are convinced of the guilt of the accused. In the case of Dr. Tatarchef, for instance, there is scarcely a doubt that he was using his influence in favour of the Exarchate and against the Patriarchate, if not in stirring up the population of Drama and the surrounding villages, though nothing of this was brought out at the trial.

We shall not know till after Baïram whether we are to witness at Salonica the hideoue spectacle of a public execution, which the town has not seen for fifteen years, or whether His Imperial Majesty will once more exercise his Royal mercy and reprieve the three men condemned to death.

Inclosure 3 in No. 34.

Abstract of the Indictment.

MIKHAILOF, Georgief, and Christof* stated that the "Reformi" had been established with the object of stirring up a revolution against the Ottoman Government; that it had been decided to form bands of brigands consisting of twelve men each, who were to be armed with Männlicher rifles and sent into the vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, and Kossovo, and that these bands were to be multiplied and increased during the month of March. Mikhailof and Christof had scoured the country as members of a brigand band, inducing the Bulgarian villagers to join the proposed union and help the Committee with money. Under the pretext of illness they had come to Salonica to extend their sphere of action. and rented a house in which they held meetings. Georgief and Mikhailof had sold shares in the Committee's loan; those who bought them were to be reimbursed when Macedonia obtained her autonomy.

Rizof stated that he had seen in the hands of the suicide Sando certificates of the loan, and in those of Toshef the future seal of the Committee.

Mikhailof confessed that he had killed a Turkish subject in Bulgaria.

Christof admitted to the police that he had belonged to a band of brigands sent from Bulgaria to the neighbourhood of Salonica, and that he had been wounded in an encounter with a detachment of soldiers. On being questioned by the Examining Magistrate he declared that he had not joined any band, that his wound had been received in a brawl with another Bulgarian, and that his first declaration had been made under restraint. The first declaration, however, was so detailed and so much in agreement with the statements of other brigands under arrest as to preclude the idea of invention.

The names of certain persons in whose houses† a search was ordered, and who in resisting the police were all killed, corresponded exactly to those of certain accomplices designated by Georgief and Mikhailof.

Nikof stated that he had been a member of the Committee for two years, and had had relations at Salonica with brigands whose avowed object was to stir up the Bulgarian population of Macedonia against the Government and bring about the independence of the country.

Palashef stated that as banker of the borrowed money he had drawn a sum of about £T. 11, with which he insured the property of the Committee. The accounts were kept by him and Toshef. The latter, aided by Matof, had drawn up the plan which specially concerned the movements of brigand bands.

Palashef, Sando, Mikhailof, Rizof, Georgief, and Lazarof, resolved at a meeting in Sando's house to have copies of the plan, which consisted of forty rules, printed for distribution among those concerned. A few copies were actually printed.

Toshef and Matof corresponded through the Austrian Post Office with the revolutionary Committees, the former taking the letters to the post and paying the postage with money belonging to the Committees of which he was depositary. Of four statements of accounts seized by the police in Lazarof's house, two were written by Palashef in the presence of Toshef and handed to the latter. And [*sic*] since the other two statements refer to the former two, they also must have been written by Palashef.

Twenty or thirty cyphered documents were found in Matof's and Toshef's house. These they would receive and forward through the Austrian post to a certain Tchonef in Bulgaria for the information of the Committee, and when they feared a domiciliary visit they sent him four open letters in a cypher of Latin characters (which was in Matof's keeping) to be handed to Sando. Toshef acknowledged that he had received three open letters in cypher as above, with the key and the white ink used for cyphering, and had handed them all over to Sando, to whom Matof also gave £T. 11 to buy arms for the Committee. Sando bought five Montenegrin revolvers and six daggers. Several of the latter, with copies of the plan and cyphered documents, were found in the house of Lazarof, who confessed that he, with others among the arrested, had helped to draw up these documents.

Rizof confessed that he was a member of the Committee, and that he had helped to draw up the documents above mentioned, and had received, read, and distributed copies of the "Reformi."

* The three men arrested, as reported by Mr. Shipley, in company with Sando, who escaped and shot himself before he could be recaptured.

† At Ghevgheli, as reported by Mr. Shipley.

Palashef stated that he had been obliged to take £T. 30 for the Committee from Trapje Christo, of Kieuprulu, and had remitted the money to Nikof. Certain documents which he signed afterwards in the presence of the police (to show that he was the author) proved that his receipts and expenses exceeded £T. 30. Before the Examining Magistrate he denied the signatures; but [*sic*] his other confessions and the statements of Nikof render his denial of no consequence, especially as he told the Magistrate that Matof had lent him £T. 35 and that he had repaid him within the last two months. This, coupled with his previous declaration that he had given the above sum in the name of the Committee, proves him to be a member of it.

The statements of Rizof and Christo Ivanof, the arrest of the carter Karadaghli, Mikhailof, and Sando, while attempting to escape from the country, and various other circumstances, prove that Karadaghli was an accomplice in the transport of arms, correspondence, and brigands.

Angelof had received at his khan Andon Tchakalof, a member of the Revolutionary Committee, had procured a passport for him, and had provided him with the means of escape. He denied these facts to the police, but confessed them to the Examining Magistrate. Hence he is regarded as a member of the Committee, having also received in his own name sums of money belonging to the Relief Committee. It is evident from the various depositions that Angelof's khan was the meeting-place of the "komitajis."

From the statements of Christo Ivanof and Rizof, it seems clear that the cook, Atanas Georgi (Angelof?), through the intervention of Christo Nikof, sheltered Rizof when he was wanted by the police; and that Ivan Nikof (Kalef?) also took him in for one or two nights.

Two revolutionary songs were found in the house of Christo Ivanof, who acted as a guide to Sando, Rizof, and (Karapetkof?). He joined them in the Bulgarian cemetery, and conducted them to a place where they found Karadaghli's waggon waiting to help them in their flight.

Karapetkof stated—and his statement is confirmed by other evidence—that he had worked for a long time as a labourer at Serres, and had come to Salonica in search of work. He had hardly been four days at Salonica when he was arrested while trying to escape with Sando to Kilkish; he refused to give his address at Salonica.

Documents found at Ivan Manoli's house at Kilkish make it clear that Karapetkof was at school at Serres, that he was expelled in consequence of a quarrel, and that he had no work. This he finally confessed, adding that when he was starting with Sando and Rizof his intention was to join the brigand band at Kilkish.

Andon (Angelof?) stated that Christof had resided with him for some months as his tenant. He did not apprise the authorities of Christof's wound. He also sheltered Sando when the police were looking for him.

From the statement of Mikhailof, Georgief, Rizof, and Lazarof, it appears that the two first and Christof, all members of a band, came to Salonica to be medically treated; that Tatarchef received them, examined them, and prescribed for them gratis; that he went and saw Kotcho [?] in his house and dressed his wounds; that these sick men (who belonged to the Revolutionary Committee, had relations with "komitajis" and collected relief money) were attended by Tatarchef, with Sando as a go-between; that a letter—the contents of which are unknown—written by a brigand named Christo Paponof, was handed to Tatarchef by Mikhailof, and that the wounded brigand Stefan Stoitchef was also attended by Tatarchef.

Rizof stated that Nikola Pontchof, who had come from Sophia to join the Ghevgheli band, was taken in by the priest Stamat, and that Tatartchef had frequently gone to Stamat's house and had interviews with Pontchof. Nikof, a member of the Committee, stated that he had delivered to Stamat £T. 2 from the Committee's relief fund. Stamat's name occurs frequently in the account books found in the house of Lazarof. Hussein Efendi, Captain of Gendarmerie, swore that Stamat is the President of the Revolutionary Committee at Salonica. Stamat was unable to produce any proofs to the contrary, and confined himself to denying all these facts, which proves him [*sic*] to be a member of the Committee.

Karadaghli stated that he had received and hidden in his house, with the help of Kalef, the student Rizof, when the police were looking for him; he harboured him one night, and next day procured him a suit of clothes to replace his school uniform, and took him to another house.

The documents and papers seized in Lazarof's house prove that the Committee had made provision for the punishment of those who contravened its Regulations, for maintaining secrecy with regard to their revolutionary movement, for the transport of arms, and for the care of wounded brigands; and that during the last four months bands

of brigands had been scouring the villages and distributing revolutionary pamphlets in Salonica and its dependencies.

Now since no Bulgarian has warned the Government, it is clear that the Bulgarian population, and consequently the above-named suspected persons are the organizers of a plot, which fact is abundantly proved by the armed resistance of fourteen brigands, who, on the authorities attempting to arrest some individuals at Boyaftcha on the evidence of Milan Mikhailof, at once attacked the officer in charge.

Inclosure 4 in No. 34.

Report of Trial of Bulgarians accused of High Treason before the Criminal Court of Appeal.

President, SAMI EFFENDI (in the absence of Shevki Bey).

First Sitting, March 11.

AFTER the indictment had been read, the Deputy Public Prosecutor, Nejmeddin Bey, maintained in his opening speech that although the acts of which the prisoners stand accused had been committed only four months ago, it was quite certain that the Bulgarians had long been working at the subversion of the present Government in Macedonia, and that the principal agents in this work were Bulgarian schoolmasters.

Milan Mikhailof, of Perlepe, 25, had stated before the Examining Magistrate that at Perlepe he had attended the Bulgarian school. He afterwards went to Sophia, where his father kept a coffee-house. Some years after he worked in the printing-house of the "Reformi," where he made the acquaintance of the President of the Macedonian Committee, Boris Sarafof, an officer of the Reserve, from near Menelik, and of the Vice-President, Rivatchef, of Ishtip, by whom he was persuaded to introduce arms into Macedonia. At Gumenje, on the frontier, he was supplied with arms, with an insurgent's dress—grey trousers and jacket and cap—a pair of shoes, a bag, a rifle, and 200 cartridges, and with two others he crossed into Turkish territory. After hiding in various villages with different people, they finally fell in with a band of eight brigands, with whom they proceeded to Stroumnitza, where they forced £ T. 150 from a reluctant miller, under the orders of the local Bulgarian schoolmaster and President of the Committee, who sent the money, through Toshef, to the Central Committee for the purchase of arms. Leaving Stroumnitza, they went to Doïran, where Mikhailof, falling ill, was given a letter by the leader of the band to Dr. Tatarchef, who on the receipt of the letter (of the contents of which Mikhailof was unaware, since it was forbidden them to read their Chiefs' letters) attended him gratuitously at Salonica, where he was also visited by Toshef, school-master and local President of the Committee, who proposed to him, on his recovery, that he should rejoin his band. He pleaded continued ill-health, however, and finally Toshef, who had kept him in money, food, and clothes, sent him with newspapers to Karasouli, whence he crossed to Miroftché, handing the papers to the local Bulgarian schoolmaster. The Bulgarian priest gave him a medjidié wherewith to return to Salonica, where he was arrested on the evening of the 18th January, together with Pet'r Toshef and Sando. He and the latter carried revolvers and daggers, Toshef only a knife, which weapons they had intended sending to Kilkish, but could not find the man they wanted to carry them there. At the same time two letters and other documents in cypher were found on Sando. The accused also stated that there were six Bulgarian bands, viz., at Kieuprulu (Veles), Tikvesh, Ghevgheli, Stroumnitza, Kilkish, and Razlog, and that fifteen others were to cross into Macedonia on the 15th (28th) March to join the former and raise the country.

The accused denied the accuracy of the depositions, which he affirmed had been extracted from him under compulsion by the Chief of Police. He now stated that he had come to from Salonica Vranya (the Bulgarian frontier town on the railway line) on horseback, with no money but 6 medjidiés, with which he paid for the hire of the horse and his board and lodging for the last two months. He had received no money from Toshef, and the arms which he was carrying belonged to Sando, who had asked him to take care of them for him. In his desire to make a complete refutation of his original statement, the accused involved himself hopelessly in self-contradiction, and finally broke down.

Kotcho Georgief, of Karlovo, the second prisoner, had stated to the Magistrate

that, being out of work at Sophia, he had been persuaded to join the Committee, and had worked at Dobritza with their representative collecting money. The Committee had issued a compulsory loan, shares in which he had forced on the inhabitants, with repayment dependent on the liberation of Macedonia. These shares, dated 1897 and 1898, the lowest of which were for 50 fr., consisted of two halves, one of which the investor retained, while the other was sent with the money to the Central Treasury. Whilst at Doubnitza he was ordered, by telegraph, to go to Kustendil, where he joined the "komitajis," and proceeded by slow stages to Stroumnitza, being entertained on the way by teachers and villagers. He left his companions at Stroumnitza, and scoured the villages with another man for subscriptions, voluntary or others, but he always treated the villagers with courtesy. He returned to the band at Stroumnitza after some time, and visited several villages with it, falling ill finally at Miroftché, whence he proceeded, with a cypher for Sando, to Salonica, where he was treated by a doctor, whom he subsequently discovered to be Tatarchef, and who charged him nothing, but also gave him nothing. Sando took him to his house, where he found Mikhailof and Rizof. Sando and Nikof gave him a little money. At the time he was arrested (15th January) he was carrying a knife and two letters in Bulgarian from Mikhailof, which the latter wished sent to his relations at Sophia and Philippopoli. The accused denied the depositions; said he had never joined a band of Bulgarians; that he came to Salonica in search of work; that he lodged with Sando because he had known him formerly; and that the knife and letters found on him were Sando's, for whom he was keeping them. He further denied having been treated gratis by any doctor, and said that the doctor who saw him was not Tatarchef. Pressed by the Public Prosecutor about the doctor's fee, he first said Sando had paid him at his (Georgief's) request, then that Sando had paid him without his knowledge, and, thirdly, that the doctor had called them back and asked them for a fee. Sando would pay because he (Georgief) had given him 50 fr. to keep, with which he had come to Salonica from Sophia, where he had earned 120 fr. by work at the Arsenal. The balance had gone in travelling expenses. He denied having worked with Rizof and Nikof in Sando's house, duplicating the Committee's Regulations. Further cross-examination produced hopeless confusion in the prisoner's statements.

Second Sitting, March 1 (14).

Christo Nikof, the next prisoner, said he was born at Ghevgheli. After eight years at the French school at Zeitounli he went to the Bulgarian gymnasium at Salonica, whence he was expelled for bad conduct. He next gave lessons at Zagram, in Austria. Then he taught at the Bulgarian schools at Radomir and other places. Last November he came to Salonica in search of work, lodged first in the Bozniak Khan, and then took a room.

In his deposition he had stated that he put himself under the orders of Matof and Toshef, the local Presidents of the Macedonian Committee, forwarding letters and other documents in connection with the propaganda for them. Among the letters was one for the Dragoman of the Bulgarian Agency at Constantinople, Dobref, and another for one Dimitrief at Athens, while several were sent through the Austrian Post Office to Sophia addressed to the teacher Tchonef, an influential "komitaji." Besides this work he distributed 3,164 piastres, given to him for that purpose by Palashef on orders from Toshef, an exact account of which distribution was found in his rooms.

Accused denied any knowledge of the money, or Palashef, or the recipients, and said he had made these statements under compulsion for fear of the Chief of Police, whom, on the day of his own examination, he had seen cruelly ill-treat Kotcho Georgief, who was examined, he said, at the same time. The Public Prosecutor disproved this by showing that Nikof had been examined five days before Georgief. Further, the priest Stamat affirms having been offered £T 2 by Nikof and having refused them, and Palashef, while denying that any money had changed hands, said he knew Nikof. A receipt from Sando was also found for 1,070 piastres, with which he had bought Montenegrin revolvers (at £T. 1 each) and other arms. The accused maintained that nothing suspicious was found on him when he was arrested, and that he was examined only as a witness; that he was called before the Chief of Police, where he found a European, who was telling the Chief of the Police what European papers were saying of the Bulgarians; and that he was forced to give evidence against Rizof, Sando, Matof, and Toshef. He confessed that he was a member of the Committee, which was working for the subversion of the Government in order to annex Macedonia to Bulgaria, or to liberate it entirely. He thought the latter idea preferable.

The Committee's Regulations were then read to him and he was charged with working at them with Toshef and Matof. This he denied in evident confusion. He explained the facility with which he had decyphered two letters for the Chief of the Police by saying that though in Latin characters they were Bulgarian words, and that

he read them only as a witness. As such he had discovered to the police the place in Lazarof's room where Matof and Toshef had hidden the copying press, &c. The Public Prosecutor confirmed this, saying that Nikof had denounced Lazarof.

Milan Rizof, of Kieuprulu, a Bulgarian student, was arrested at the Tumulus, close to Salonica, with Sando, Karapetkof and another (who escaped), while on their way to Kilkish in the Karadaghli's waggon. Third Sitting, March 18.

He had stated previously that a certain Traïtché had introduced him to the Committees' and had given him the "Reformi" to distribute, with instructions to push the propaganda; that the "Reformi" was read and discussed openly in Bulgarian schools; that Traïtché received the papers, letters, &c., through the Austrian Post Office under the name of "Blanco;" that when he had left to see the bands at Kilkish he had fetched the papers. He had copied letters dealing with Turkish atrocities in Macedonia and destined for the "Reformi;" and though he denied it, he had to acknowledge the handwriting. He came in contact with eight or ten Bulgarians from Sophia and the interior, who were on their way to join different bands. Nikof and Kotcho Christof stayed at his room, the latter wounded in a fight between Stroumnitza and Doïran. Tatartchef came and attended him. Five days before his arrest Nikof brought a copying press, some paper, a decypher, and the Regulations to his room, where he and Nikof worked at the latter with several others of the prisoners. Toshef was the local leader of the bands, Matof, President, and Palashef, Treasurer. Toshef and Nikof received cypher letters sealed with the seal of the Committee, which was a revolver and a dagger. Accused had made a copy of it for the Chief of the Police. He denied this, but said that the Chief of Police had told him to make a drawing of a revolver and dagger, and he had done so. Like the other prisoners, he denied *in toto* his deposition before the Examining Magistrate, saying that it had been forced from him.

Kotcho Lazarof, of Ishtib, the next prisoner, had said he had been expelled from the Bulgarian schools at Uskub, Kustendil, and Salonica. He lodged here with Rizof; later with Rizof, Traïtché and Sando, whom he first met last September. Rizof introduced him to the Committee. Toshef asked him to take in a friend, but he said his room was overlooked. Nevertheless, Stoitchef came and lodged with him for a month.

Accused denied everything, including knowledge of some papers bearing his signature, which he said the Chief of Police had forced him to sign. The copying press, cypher, &c., were taken to his room and hidden there without his consent.

Kotcho Lazarof, whose examination had not concluded on the previous day, denied that Nikof ever went to his rooms in his absence, or deposited cyphers, papers, &c., in them. As for the documents signed by him, the police, after having made a collection of his books, put some papers before him, and forced him to sign them. In them it was stated that Christo Entchef had gone to Kirk-Kilissa to join a band, whereas he had really gone there as a teacher. He had not told Matof to give Entchef money, but knowing him to be poor, he had discounted a bill on his six months' pay for him at a money-changer's. Matof had no money. In his deposition he had stated to the Magistrate that he had received 1½ medjidiés from Matof. He denied having stated this to the Magistrate, but admitted the possibility of his having done so to the Chief of Police. He did not know where Entchef was now. He knew Tchakalof, of Constantinople, but had not received a letter from him through the Austrian Post Office. He was persuaded to tell the Chief of Police, who assured him that he would be needed only as a witness, that he had copied a letter of Nikof's to the "Reformi," in which the Turks were said to be massacring and persecuting the Bulgarians. But he had not copied it, and did not know till that moment what its contents were. He denied that he had transmitted three letters from Nikof to Tchonef, or that he knew Stoitchef, who was said to have formed a band of brigands at Samakof, and to have lodged with him for one month. He did not know Kotcho Christof, whom he had stated in the preliminary examination that he had met at Rizof's, when the latter was so drunk as to create an uproar; nor did he know he had been wounded. He did not know he had been wounded. He had received no money from the Committee. His father sent him £ T. 2 a-month, on which he lived. He had admitted his guilt in not informing the authorities of what was going on. Fourth Sitting, March 19.

Kotcho Christof Tchonka had come to Salonica four and a-half months ago from Philippopoli, viâ Kustendil, Stroumnitza, and Doïran on foot. He had shot a man in a political brawl in a tavern of that town, and had himself been wounded in the hand by the police. Hence, though a shoemaker, he was unable to work at Salonica. He had 120 fr. and a gold chain taken from him by the local police. He lodged in the room of Anton, of Kilkish, and knew Sando in Sophia, where the latter worked in a merchant's

office. He had been visited by him three times: once alone, once with Rizof, and the last time when Sando was about to go to sleep for the night there, the police came, and escaped by jumping over the wall. He saw no doctor for his wound. He did not know Dr. Tatarchef, but said that [*sic*] a great Pasha's son-in-law had offered him his liberty, £ T. 20, and a billet in the police if he would implicate Tatarchef. He had stated to the Bimbashi that he had joined a band of eleven at Kustendil, eight of whom were armed with Martinis and three with rifles of other kinds; that he had been wounded between Stroumitza and Doïran by soldiers; and that the band had been formed for murder and for the raising of subscriptions.

He now stated that he had been so beaten by the Bimbashi that he had lost his head, and said anything that the latter put into his mouth. The Public Prosecutor asked him for proof of this statement, as also why, when visited by himself and the district doctor, he had said nothing to them about it. No answer.

Todor Ivan Karapetkof, of Ghevgheli, spent three years at the Bulgarian school at Ghevgheli and one and a-half at the Bulgarian gymnasium at Serres, from which he was expelled. His father's consequent ill-treatment of him at home drove him back to Serres, where he worked as a mason. Last Christmas he came here and lodged in a khan, but he could not remember which. His leather bag was stolen from him with his passport and £ T. ½. Having no money and no work, he decided to return to Serres on foot. At the tumulus he saw a cart with three men in it; the driver told him they were going to Kilkish, and said he would take him. Accused denied having wished to join a band or having hidden in the cemetery. He declared he had been badly beaten.

Ango Karadaghli, Arabaji, said he plied two or three times a-week, carrying tradesmen and their goods between Kilkish and Salonica. He met first two men and then another, and took them, as he would any one else who asked, in his cart. He had seen Sando at the Monastir Khan, but did not know Karapetkof. He denied Rizof's statement that he had carried brigands and weapons.

Christo Ivanof, blacksmith, said he had copied the two revolutionary songs found in his room, but [*sic*] as he could neither read nor write, he did not know what they meant. One day, when he was lying ill in his room, a certain Nakof Dinof came and told him he would be shot if he did not present himself next morning at the Bulgarian cemetery. When he got there he met Sando, Rizof, and Karapetkof, who told him to guide them to the tumulus. On his refusing, Sando covered him with a revolver, and so made him precede them to where a cart was waiting for them. He received no money.

Fifth Sitting, March 23.

Mito Palashef, of Kieuprulu, denied that he was Treasurer to the Committee, or that he had given money to Nikof and Traïtché. He also repudiated the depositions he had made to the Magistrate, which were forced from him by severe and continual floggings in the police Prefecture. When he was taken to the Examining Magistrate he told him that he was suffering great pain.

The Public Prosecutor hereupon asked him why he had not told him when he was called before him in the presence of the Russian Dragoman, who had come to settle a matter between the accused and a Russian subject. The accused did not answer.

The reading of the deposition of the accused before the Examining Magistrate was continued. Traïtché had called at his house and given him £ T. 35, ordering him with threats to give them to a man (whom he described), who would call for the money. The man actually came, and accused gave him the money in instalments.

All this the accused denied. He admitted that he had made continual loans to Matof, who with an income of £ T. 70 a-year was always short of cash. Matof paid him back regularly. The accused denied, however, all dealings, pecuniary or other, with the Committee, whose very existence he had first heard of from the Examining Magistrate. He certainly knew Toshef, but only as Secretary to the Bulgarian Bishop, and had only met him in the Bozniak Khan. The accounts, though bearing his signature, were not his. He signed a vast amount of papers while being beaten, of the contents of which he had no idea.

Christo Matof, teacher at the Bulgarian school here during the last three years, professed absolute ignorance of a Committee and brigand bands. He knew a few of the accused, but denied that he was intimate with any of them. He had not collected money for arms or cared for the wounded. He was beaten like the rest. It was true that he had refused to say anything, but then he knew nothing. The chiefs of gendarmerie and police hailed him before them, and beat him six nights running; he was left fourteen days without covering; he was given only bread and water, and was not allowed to sleep at night; and all this with the object of forcing him to say what he

did not know. There were no grounds for his arrest; nothing suspicious was found in his rooms. He knew Stamat as the priest who came to officiate at the school. He was for three years Director of the Uskub school and Secretary to the Exarchate. What evidence the police had against him was wrung from prisoners who now denied it. He could not have hidden Mikhailof and Rizof in the gymnasium, for there were no unused rooms. He had nothing to do with the drawing-up of the Committee's Regulations. The examining Magistrate, besides ill-treating him, had put various answers in the depositions which he (the accused) had never made.

Pet't Naoum Toshef, Secretary of the Bulgarian Bishop and Inspector of Bulgarian Schools, persisted in his ignorance of the existenee of a Committee, &c. He denied his and everybody else's depositions; they had been wrung from them by the police, and he emphatically repudiated as unsound the theory that papers bearing a man's signature must necessarily have been signed by him.

Christo Nikola Tatarchef said he had come to Salonica to practise as a doctor eight years ago. He knew some, not all, of the prisoners. He did not know Sando, whose name the Examining Magistrate had been the first to mention to him. A doctor might treat a hundred patients in a day, making no difference of religion or nationality, and it was ridiculous to expect him to remember their names or even their faces. If the Court knew he had attended Mikhailof and Sando, why annoy him with questions? If he had known Mikhailof as stated, what was the use of the letter of introduction which he was accused of receiving? Evidence before the Examining Magistrate against him did not concern him; he only took account of what was said in Court; and all the evidence had been contradicted or repudiated as forgeries. In any case, let the Court prove the charges made against him; the onus of proof lay on the accuser, not the onus of disproof on the accused. If the President of the Court knew of his connection with the Committee, let him prove it. The truth was that the police had not been able to obtain a particle of condemnatory evidence against him, and in consequence had fabricated it. The medicine found on the brigand Stoïtchef, who was killed at Biaftché, may or may not have been made up from a prescription of his. He was not responsible for the apothecary who made up his recipe, nor for the people who made use of the medicine. The recipe (produced and acknowledged by the accused as his) was written out for "Aleksandrof." In the apothecary's book it was entered as for "A. L.," which the police alleged, with no reason at all, as proof that it was meant for Aleksand'r Lazarof, of which name ("Aleksand'r") "Sando" was a Bulgarian diminutive. Accused stated that his movements lately had been to Constantinople to have his diploma legalized, and to Uskub, Ghevgheli, Vodena, and elsewhere on professional visits. It was mere lying to assert that he had treated wounded brigands at Ghevgheli and Doïran. He was not a surgeon, but a physician.

Stamat Atanas Tontchef, priest, denied that he had hidden brigands in his house, which was also a church and a school. He had received no money, and when he said so to the Examining Magistrate, he had done so to help out Palashef and Nikof, who were in difficulties. The accounts contained the name of "Stamat" on the credit side no doubt, but there were hundreds of Stamats, and the name was "Stamat," not "Papa (priest) Stamat."

Andon Angelof, of Kilkish, stated that his wife had, in his absence, one day taken in a lodger, and that his suspicions had later been aroused by the smell of iodine. The lodger, Kotcho Christof, explained that it was an old wound reopened. The evening of Kotcho's arrest he heard that the name of the only visitor Kotcho had received was Sando, who escaped. Sixth Sitting. March 25.

Vasil Angelof Montchef said that many people of different nationalities and from different parts came to his khan to sleep or feed. He had known Tchakalof as a Bulgarian teacher here, and had stood guarantee and obtained a teskéré for him, as Tchokalof's passport was *visé* by the Turkish Consul at Philippopoli.

Atanas Georgi Angelof said that the only one of the accused he had met before meeting them all in prison was Matof, an old schoolfellow of his. The accounts by which he was proved to have received money, and on which the police laid so much stress, were the Bulgarian church accounts, of which he was Trustee.

Nako Pop Nedelkof, carpenter, denied having hidden Rizof.

Witnesses for the prosecution, consisting chiefly of police officials, described the arrest of Rizof, Sando, Ango Ivanof, and Karapetkof, the suicide of Sando, and the visits in the houses of Georgief and Christof. They merely repeated the evidence denied by the prisoners; and the manner in which those of the witnesses who did not belong to the police—*e.g.*, the man who drove the police in their pursuit of Rizof, &c.—

gave their evidence seemed to leave no doubt that it was inspired and learnt thoroughly by heart.

Seventh Sitting, March 27.

The Clerk of the Court proceeded to read (*a*) the documents put in by the prosecution, describing the nature of the weapons and seditious literature which had been seized; (*b*) letters from the Kaïmakams of Doïran and Ghevgheli, reporting the confiscation of 110 rifles of different kinds found in the possession of Bulgarian peasants in their districts; (*c*) a copy, legalized by the Ministry of the Interior, of a second set of Regulations said to have been drawn up by the Macedonian Committee, and to have been discovered at Serres. From these Regulations it would appear that, besides the Central Committee in Sophia, there exist three Head Committees in Macedonia—one at Salonica (with Tatarchef as President), another at Monastir, and a third at Kilkish. The object of the Committee is described, and the details of the work to be done are laid down.

Dr. Tatarchef, recalled, said that he was somewhere near the tenth person who, in that Court, in the course of a week, had been said to be the local Head of the Committee. The Regulations were either an official forgery or the pure invention of newsmongers, of whom the worst was the "Pesther Lloyd" correspondent, who had also written abusively of the Vali. Why not imprison his Excellency? To bring such rubbish into Court was to mock at justice.

The Public Prosecutor then summed up, and demanded the punishment of the accused, whom he divided into three categories, viz., those who had entered Turkish territory bearing arms, those who had plotted as "komitajis" against the Government, and those who had been proved to be accomplices.

Counsel for the defence, six in number, restricted themselves to attempting to obtain the lightest punishment possible.

The Public Prosecutor again demanded the full penalties of the law.

The prisoners, asked whether they had anything to say, declared, through Matof, that what little evidence there was against them had been obtained by force and violence, and that, if they were condemned, it would only be to save the Chief of Police, who was ordered to produce sufficient proofs against them, and whom their acquittal for want of such proofs would ruin.

The Court withdrew to consider their verdict, and returned after an absence of about an hour and a-half. The President then announced that Vasil Angelof, Andon Angelof, Atanas Angelof, Ivan Kalef, and Nedelkof were acquitted, and the rest found guilty.

The Public Prosecutor demanded the punishment of the latter under Articles 56, 58, and 63 of the Penal Code.

After retiring for a few minutes to deliberate the Court returned again, and the President delivered their sentence, by which Mikhaïlof, Georgief, and Christof were sentenced to death, under Article 56 of the Code; Nikof, Rizof, Lazarof, Matof, Toshef, Pahashef, and Karapetkof to penal servitude for life, under Article 58; Tontchef, Tatarchef, and Ango Ivanof to five years' hard labour, under Article 63: and Christo Ivanof to two years imprisonment, under Article 66.

No. 35.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 15.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 10, 1901.

DURING the night of the 5th instant Sarafoff, the President of the Macedonian Committee; Davidoff, the Vice-President; Kovacheff, the Secretary, and several other members of the Committee, were arrested, and their lodgings, as well as the offices of the Committee, were taken possession of by the authorities.

Sarafoff and Davidoff were accosted by a Commissaire de Police as they came out of a Café Chantant together, and were requested to accompany him to the Préfecture de Police.

They asked to see the warrant, and as it was not forthcoming they drew revolvers and threatened resistance. They were, therefore, accompanied to Sarafoff's lodging, and the warrant was sent for; upon the production of it they surrendered quietly.

In the course of the following day further arrests were made, and I understand there are now in custody thirteen of the persons condemned by default by the Roumanian Court, and seven of their associates.

In informing me the next morning of what had been done, M. Daneff, the

Minister for Foreign Affairs, said the arrest had been made upon the warrant of the Juge d'Instruction, intrusted with the examination of the Roumanian "dossier," and he hoped they would be recognized as a proof of the determination of the Bulgarian Government to insist on the execution of the law.

On the day on which the arrests were made, the "Reformi," the organ of the Macedonian Committee, published an article in which the Prince is accused of using the Macedonian question solely with a view to his own advantage. It declares that in 1895 he encouraged the Committee to organize the incursions which were made into Macedonia, and which resulted in the loss of valuable lives without any profit to the Macedonian cause, but which contributed to bring about the recognition of the Prince in the following year, while now he is threatening the Macedonian Society with suppression at the bidding of the foreign Powers.

It protests against the arbitrary "internement" of Macedonians (which has, in fact, been carried out in several places), and calls upon those who are thus, as it says, illegally treated, in their turn to disregard the law. The article has been thought to be the immediate cause of the arrests being made, but they must, as a matter of fact, have been decided on before it appeared.

Several of the newspapers, and especially the "Narodni Prava," M. Rodoslavoff's organ, protest vehemently against the action of the Government, and there is some ferment among the Macedonians, whom the Government party, while in opposition, had led to expect different treatment at their hands.

On the 7th instant placards summoning a public meeting to protest against the arrest of the Committee were posted in Sophia, and were torn down by the police. In one instance a gendarme endeavouring to prevent the posting of a placard, was threatened with revolvers. He summoned assistance, and some persons were arrested, but the mob became so menacing that they were released by the Prefect of Police, who, however, has since been dismissed. The meeting was held in an inclosed place, and passed off without special incident.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 36.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 18.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 15, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches from the Vice-Consuls at Rustchuk and Philippopoli, on the subject of the Macedonian movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 36.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Rustchuk, April* 8, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that neither yesterday nor the previous Sunday was there any military exercise carried out by the Macedonians.

I believe it has been said in some newspapers that with regard to Sunday, the 31st March, the Committee-men were dispersed by the Government forces: this is going too far; as far as I have been able to ascertain, all that happened was that the Government made it known that it would disperse them if necessary, and then sent six gendarmes to the drill-ground, but no Macedonians appeared: yesterday they only sent four gendarmes, and again there was no appearance of Macedonians.

I believe the fact is that the vast majority of the Macedonians were formerly compelled to turn out by their leaders, and that they were exceedingly glad of the excuse to abstain.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 36.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Rustchuk, April* 10, 1901.

I HEAR on good authority that both last Sunday and the Sunday before the Macedonians at Silistria were being drilled, to the number of about 100, by officers in uniform.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

Inclosure 3 in No. 36.

Vice-Consul McGregor to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Philippopoli, April* 12, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that, with the permission of the authorities, a meeting called by the Macedonian Committee was held here yesterday afternoon to protest against the arrest of Boris Sarafoff and the other Macedonian leaders in Sophia. Although it was a market-day, and the Stambolists, irritated by the quashing of the Philippopoli elections and the dissolution of the Municipality, had done all in their power to make the meeting a success, the demonstration did not attract more than the 500 or 600 persons who usually attend such assemblies, and the proceedings were marked by no noteworthy incident. A black flag with skull and cross-bones was displayed and the speakers, none of whose utterances, I believe, call for remark, were M. Yossifcheff, Secretary of the Bulgarian Metropolitan and of the Macedonian Committee; MM. Despotoff and Blagoyeff, Socialists; M. Christo Ivan Popoff, a local lawyer; and Gherjikoff, a youthful adventurer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

No. 37.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 15, 1901.

HIS Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica reports that the accounts of actrocities which appeared in the "Standard" last month as having been committed by a band of Turks under Rutbeli Ali Pasha are probably exaggerated. I thought it well, however, to mention these rumours to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and at an interview which I had with him yesterday I urged that every effort should be made to prevent the execution of the law being attended with acts of cruelty.

Tewfik Pasha assured me that he felt confident the reports were much exaggerated, but he took note of the alleged facts with a view to making further inquiries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 38.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 20, 1901

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th March, I have the honour to report that I asked M. Daneff, the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, this morning whether it was true that the Ottoman Commissioner had addressed to him a second note demanding the suppression of the Macedonian Societies. He replied that it was, but that he could not send an answer different from that which he had returned to the first note, namely, that it was impossible for the Government to suppress a Society which was legally constituted, but that if the members of it, or any other

person, committed acts contrary to the law, they would be proceeded against. He could not understand why Nedjib Effendi, who had been here during the régime of several Governments which had taken no measures whatever against the Macedonian Committee, had reserved his strongest representations to address to the only Government which had done anything. He could not conceal from me that his relations with Nedjib Effendi were very strained. He said he was constantly sending him complaints that bands of forty, fifty, or sixty men had crossed the frontier; that he never could name the localities where this had taken place, and the complaints were in fact unfounded. I said that I myself had heard of a conflict having taken place about three weeks ago near Jumha between Turkish troops and a band of about thirty Bulgarians—whether from the Principality or not, I could not say—in which ten of the band were killed and the rest escaped across the frontier. (I was referring to the case reported by Sir N. O'Conor in his despatch of the 31st March.) M. Daneff said that he very much doubted the truth of the report; such an occurrence could hardly have taken place without the knowledge of the Bulgarian Government, which had nevertheless heard nothing about it.

M. Daneff professed to know nothing definite of the proceedings of the Macedonian Congress, which is now sitting at Sophia. He said the election of the Committee would take place to-day, and he heard that there was great diversity of opinion as to the choice of a President.

The meeting of the Congress in the face of the notes of the Turkish Government is no doubt regarded by the latter as something like a challenge; but they were ill-advised in demanding the total suppression of the Macedonian Societies, which is an impossibility, as Nedjib Effendi has sometimes admitted to me.

The Ottoman Commissioner was summoned to Constantinople four days ago.

Meetings of protest against the arrest of the members of the Macedonian Commitee were held on the Orthodox Easter Monday at Sophia and some other towns; but the attendance appears to have been neither large nor enthusiastic.

The application of Sarafoff and his companions to be released on bail has been rejected both by the Court of First Instance and by the Court of Appeal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 39.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April 20, 1901.*

I ASKED M. Daneff to-day whether it was true, as stated by the News Agency, that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople had interceded with the Turkish Government in favour of the Bulgarians in Macedonia. His Excellency replied that he hoped that not only the Russian, but all the Ambassadors had done so, for he had instructed the Bulgarian Agent to apply to them all. The Bulgarian Government were doing their best to repress agitation, but the only way to put an end to it was for the Turkish Government to render existence tolerable to their subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 40.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April 24, 1901.*

THE proceedings of the Macedonian Congress terminated on the 21st instant with the election of a provisional Committee to carry on the Administration until the ordinary meeting of the Congress in July. The persons elected were: Professor Mikhailovsky, President; Dr. Vladoff, Vice-President; Messrs. Kepoff, Secretary; Dimitroff, Minkoff, and Petroff, Treasurer; the two latter being members of the old Committee who have not been arrested. They are all said to belong to the party of action, excepting the President, who is reported to hold moderate views. He has, however, in conjunction with General Tsoncheff, another candidate for the presidency, lately published a pamphlet in which he admits that dislike of Bulgaria is now general

in Europe, and ascribes it to the mistaken foreign policy pursued by successive Bulgarian Governments, the responsibility for which he ascribes entirely to the Prince. The unfriendly attitude of Russia, he says, is due to their dislike of the Prince; as they cannot get rid of him themselves, "they beat the horse to make him unseat the rider."

The Macedonian Congress deputed Professor Mikhailovsky, General Tsoncheff and another to visit Sarafoff and his companions in prison and thank them for their services. The further proceedings of the Congress have not been divulged.

Professor Mikhailovsky is one of several teachers in public schools who attended the Congress notwithstanding the formal prohibition of their doing so on pain of dismissal. The Minister for Foreign Affairs has assured one of my colleagues that the penalty will be enforced.

The Minister of the Interior has issued a Circular confirming an Order of his predecessor forbidding the collection of subscriptions in favour of the Macedonian Societies, except among members of those Societies, and giving instructions that this Order is to be strictly observed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 41.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 26, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 13th February last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting on the trial of thirteen Bulgarians charged with the shooting of a Captain and several gendarmes at Ishtib in January last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Acting Consul-General Freeman.

Sir, *Uskub, April 22, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the trial of thirteen Bulgarian prisoners from Ishtib, charged with implication in the shooting of a Captain and several gendarmes there (as reported in my despatch of the 20th January last) has now commenced at Uskub. The five Bulgarians alleged to have actually fired upon, killed, and wounded the Turks in question have not been arrested, and are to be judged by default.

Several other Bulgarians are now in prison here accused of having entertained or sheltered four armed Bulgarians who passed through the villages of Bresnitza, Kolyé, and another in the Uskub Caza, with intent to incite the peasantry to sedition. Some twelve men were brought under arrest to Uskub from the villages in question. Of these, two were maltreated on the way by gendarmes, who have since been imprisoned by the Vali, and another was beaten. Most of the men thus arrested were subsequently, I am informed, released.

The country lying between Radovishté and Strumitza seems to be in a somewhat disturbed state. During or after the Greek Easter an encounter took place near the village of Konché, near Radovishté, between a band of eight Bulgarians and a force of gendarmes. Three Bulgarians were killed, it appears, but the rest escaped. One zaptieh was wounded. The five survivors of the band seem to have made their way to the mountains around Strumitza, and to have now collected a numerous following of armed peasants. It is, moreover, rumoured that the village of Popchevo, in the same district, has been deserted by numbers of young Bulgarians, who have taken themselves armed to the mountains, in consequence of the alleged severity displayed by the Gendarmerie or troops in that and other villages. It is not improbable, however, that they will return, at no distant date, to their homes. Eight Bulgarian prisoners were conveyed a day or two ago to Uskub from the village of Konché,

charged with having held relations with the band referred to as having made its appearance in that vicinity.

The trial of the Ishtib Bulgarians is to be followed, I understand, by that of the Kumanova and other prisoners, who are now in gaol here. I will not fail to report, in due course, the result of the various trials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 42.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 26, 1901.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Salonica, reporting that a fight took place on the 14th instant between Bulgarian brigands and a party of Gendarmerie at Demir-kapou, on the Salonica–Uskub Railway.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Acting Consul-General Freeman to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, April 16, 1901.*

THE British postal kavass, who returned last night, has told me that during his journey to the frontier, on the 14th instant, at a point near the village of Gradis, between the stations of Strumitza and Demirkapou, a band of some fourteen or fifteen Bulgarian Macedonians, armed with rifles, were seen by him and others at a distance of 200 or 300 yards from the train. On his return last night the kavass learned that the gendarmes in the neighbouring towns had been warned, and had succeeded in coming up with the band. A fight ensued, resulting in a loss to the Bulgarians of two killed and one wounded. The latter was taken prisoner, but the rest of the band escaped. The gendarmes appear to have had no casualties.

According to the Deputy Public Prosecutor here, a large number of rifles have been discovered in the district of Tikvesh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. G. FREEMAN.

No. 43.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 1, 1901.*

IN the accompanying despatch addressed to the Acting Consul-General at Salonica, the Acting Consular Agent at Janina reports that, with the hope of improving public security in the vilayet, the Vali has summoned the leading Albanian Beys to Janina.

Reports as to the grave state of affairs in the Vilayet of Janina have constantly reached me of late, and I have on several occasions called the attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the disturbed condition of the province, owing to the brigandage universally prevalent there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 43.

Mr. Millelire to Acting Consul-General Freeman.

(Extrait.) *Janina, le* 18 *Avril,* 1901.

LE Gouverneur-Général, Osman Pacha, de plus en plus impressionné par le brigandage et le mécontentement qui domine en province, surtout parmi les populations Musulmanes, a décidé de convoquer dans cette ville tous les Beys et les Chefs Albanais influents. Tous ces Beys ne seront pas réunis tous à la fois, mais au fur et à mesure, pour qu'on ne donne pas trop d'importance à la chose. Soureya Pacha, de Valona, et plusieurs Beys de Lescovich, sont déjà arrivés *ad audiendum verbum.* Soureya Pacha est un des gros bonnets du vilayet. Son frère, Férid Bey, est Gouverneur-Général à Konia; il est aussi, à cause de sa femme, parent de Essad Pacha, Commandant de cette Gendarmerie.

Ces Beys ne savent pas encore le but de leur appel. On croit généralement que le Valy fera des recommandations pour la tranquillité publique, et qu'il demandera d'eux des garanties à ce but. Les Beys en général sont tous très mécontents. Quelqu'un me dit qu'il répondra au Valy que la meilleure garantie serait celle d'avoir une Administration moins voleuse, moins injuste et plus soucieuse du pauvre, lequel entre les Agents des impôts et le brigandage est complètement mourant de faim.

(Translation.)

(Extract.) *Janina, April* 18, 1901.

OSMAN PASHA, the Governor-General, being seriously concerned on account of the brigandage and discontent prevailing in this province, especially among the Mussulmans, has decided to summon all the influential Albanian Beys and Chiefs to this city. The Beys will not all assemble at the same time, but in parties, in order that too much importance may not be attached to the matter. Sureya Pasha, of Valona, and several Beys of Lescovich have already arrived *ad andiendum verbum.* Sureya Pasha is one of the important men of the vilayet. His brother, Ferid Bey, is Governor-General of Konia; he is also, through his wife, a relation of Essad Pasha, Commander of the Gendarmerie here.

These Beys do not yet know why they have been sent for. It is generally thought that the Vali will give them instructions for keeping the people quiet, and that he will call upon them to give guarantees for this purpose. The Beys are all very discontented. One of them tells me that he will reply to the Vali that the best guarantee would be an administration less rapacious, less unjust, and more mindful of the poor, who, between the tax-collectors and the brigands, are absolutely dying of hunger.

No 44.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 13.)

My Lord, *Sophia, May* 8, 1901.

THE Juge d'Instruction charged with the investigation of the case against Sarafoff and the other members of the Macedonian Committee has been relieved of his task, which has been intrusted to another Magistrate. M. Daneff, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, told me that this had been done because he was not displaying sufficient energy and independence, and was endeavouring to cover his responsibility by constantly appealing to the Government for instructions, which it was not in their province to give.

Some people, however, believe that this account is the exact reverse of the truth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 45.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 13.)

My Lord, *Sophia, May* 8, 1901.

THE last time I saw M. Daneff, the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, I asked him what he thought of the composition of the new Macedonian Committee. He replied that Mikhailovsky, the President, was a poet and an idealist, liable to vary his opinions from day to day according to the nature of his latest impressions, but quite incapable of sanctioning the criminal methods adopted by Sarafoff. The other members of the Committee were young men, but most of them of fairly moderate views. The important result of the Congress, he said, was the condemnation expressed of the methods of Sarafoff by a large majority.

I asked his Excellency how he reconciled this alleged condemnation of the methods of Sarafoff with the dispatch of a deputation to express to him the sympathy and thanks of the Congress. He replied that it was one of those illogical proceedings which often took place in this country, and that he supposed the idea was to express appreciation of the good intentions of Sarafoff, but not of the manner in which he had attempted to carry them out.

The Ottoman Commissioner does not think that the policy of the Macedonian Committee will be much affected by the change in the composition of it. He does not believe in the efficacity or sincerity of any of the measures taken by the Government except as regards the collection of funds, which he admits has been stopped, to such good purpose that he understands the chest of the Committee now only contains 30,000 fr.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 46.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 13.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, May* 7, 1901.

THE occurrence of disturbances on the Turco-Servian frontier does not at present give rise to the same anxiety as it did formerly, owing to the mutual desire of the Servian and Turkish Governments to avoid raising difficulties which in the present state of Macedonia might lead to serious consequences.

I understand from Fethy Pasha that an unfortunate incident, which occurred on the 25th April, was caused by a Servian frontier guard encroaching on Turkish territory. On being told to retire he did so, but was joined by a number of his companions; a disturbance ensued and shots were exchanged, one Servian being wounded, who afterwards died. The Servians, who were now in considerable force, crossed the Turkish frontier, where they made a sort of demonstration, but on the Turks threatening to send for reinforcements they retired.

A somewhat more serious disturbance took place more recently. It does not appear that any loss of life occurred, but about forty Servian families living in Turkish territory were compelled by threats and intimidation on the part of the Albanians to take refuge in Servian territory. In alluding to the matter Dr. Vouitch, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, said it was causing the Government some anxiety, as these refugees would have to be supported. He did not, however, appear to consider that the matter would have serious results.

No. 47.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 15.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May* 10, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 7th instant, I have the honour to report that the disturbances in Old Servia, alluded to therein as having obliged forty families of Servian origin to take refuge in Servian territory, are of greater importance than at first appeared. As explained to me yesterday by the Minister for Foreign

Affairs, it is not a frontier dispute of the ordinary type arising out of an attempt at smuggling, nor has it occurred in a district subject to the influence of the Macedonian Committee, in which severe measures are doubtless justifiable, but it is rather an outbreak of turbulence among the Albanians in the Sandjak of Novi Bazar, which the Porte is apparently quite unable to repress.

The murder, under somewhat aggravated circumstances, of two unoffending Notables near Sienitza, and the fact that the Christian population is not being allowed to possess fire-arms or defend itself, has, of course, given rise to energetic protests on the part of the Servian Government, who have strongly urged the Porte in its own interests to maintain order in the district.

It appears, however, that although professing the best intentions, the Porte is unable to do so; and that the manifestation of her authority against the band of brigands near Ipek, reported in my despatch of the 14th March, has not been followed with the results which were hoped for.

The state of affairs in Albania is too notorious to require further description now, and when it is remembered that it is a district in which the Government has been unable to put in force its own Regulations for a tobacco monopoly, it is not surprising that it is unable to carry out its duty of protecting the Christian population.

Sienitza, I am informed, is a place where there is an Austrian garrison which gives rise to the danger of a possible intervention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 48.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 22.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, May 14, 1901.*

I HAVE received a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, reporting the arrest of a prominent Macedonian Voïvoda, or incursionist leader.

The incident appears to show that the present Bulgarian Government is really in earnest in wishing to prevent disturbances at present.

No. 49.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, May 21, 1901.*

ON my congratulating M. Daneff on the arrest of a Macedonian leader, reported in my despatch of the 14th instant, his Excellency said that not only the leader but the whole of his band had been secured, as well as another band in the neighbourhood of Bourgas, and that the local authorities were now convinced that the Government were in serious earnest in their action against the agents of the Macedonian Committee.

I said I thought it a pity, while the Government were acting in such a meritorious manner, that they should allow their organs in the press to continue to excite public opinion by their articles on the state of affairs in Macedonia. Nobody, I said, expected them to say that the province was properly administered; but it was a mistake for them to give currency to reports which independent observers on the spot showed to be greatly exaggerated.

The Minister replied that public opinion in Bulgaria was not easily excited, and that no one ought ever to pay the slightest attention to what any Bulgarian newspaper said.

The present Government are curiously regardless of what is published by the acknowledged organs of their party, and the Ottoman Commissioner has more than once remonstrated seriously on the subject of violent attacks against the Sultan and the Turkish Government which have appeared in them, but he has obtained no satisfaction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 50.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 3.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 25, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th April, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting on the movements of Bulgarian revolutionary bands in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Uskub, May 21, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 22nd ultimo, reporting, among other matters, the appearance of an armed band of upwards of 100 Bulgarians in the Strumitza district, I now have the honour to report that, according to information received from a reliable source, the band in question has now broken up into several smaller bands, one of which appears to have started for the Radovishté neighbourhood, whilst the others are believed to be making for Serres and other parts of the Salonica Vilayet. It is thought that a considerable number of fugitives from Popchevo and other villages have purposely avoided contact with the Strumitza band, and have by this time made their way across the Bulgarian frontier.

A Bulgarian of Kumanovtsi, a village near Kumanova, but lying within the Caza of Uskub, was murdered there on the 15th instant. Four other Bulgarians of that village were murdered at different times during the past year whilst tending their cattle (which afterwards disappeared) in the immediate neighbourhood, among them being Boyco Yancoff and Colé Ivanoff. Various Bulgarians were arrested in connection with the murders, but no Moslems. Kumanovtsi comprises, nevertheless, eighty Albanian houses against only forty-five Bulgarians. And the fact of the disappearance of the cattle would seem to indicate Albanian, rather than Bulgarian, responsibility for the crimes in question.

A revolutionary band of three or four Bulgarians is alleged to have recently traversed the Osmanié district near the frontier, and fourteen Bulgarians—three being women—were brought under arrest to Uskub on the 15th instant, charged with having sheltered, or held relations with them. The trials of the Ishtib and Kumanova prisoners, alluded to in my despatch of the date referred to, are still proceeding, and, it is feared, may drag on for some time. The Ishtib prisoners have declared in Court that the allegations made by them before the Juge d'Instruction were false or misunderstood, and have cited a number of witnesses to give evidence in their favour. The examination of these witnesses is now slowly proceeding. I will report at length as soon as the trials conclude.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 51.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 10.)

My Lord, *Sophia, June 7, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, reporting on the proceedings of Macedonian bands in the district of Rupchos, on this side of the frontier, the uneasiness among the Mussulman Bulgarians, and the insufficient activity of the authorities.

Some days ago the Ottoman Commissioner told me that he had had occasion to make serious representations with regard to the persecution of Mussulmans in various parts of the Principality, and especially in the Varna and Razgrad districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Vice-Consul McGregor to Mr. Elliot.

(Extract.) *Philippopoli, June* 5, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday I had a conversation with M. Manoloff, Prefect of Philippopoli, on his return from a few days' journey in the district of Rupchos, where the proceedings of the Macedonian bands seems of late to have been causing the Bulgarian Government some anxiety.

M. Manoloff was rather reticent, but he informed me that the primary motive of his tour of inspection had been the unrest observed among the Pomaks, many of whom were making preparations to emigrate on account of systematic robbery and persecution on the part of the less wealthy Christian inhabitants, acting in concert with the emissaries of the Macedonian Committee at Sophia.

The observations he had made during his journey—which comprised visits to Khfoina and Chepelaré—fully confirmed the reports which had previously reached him regarding the lawlessness prevailing throughout the district. He further admitted that the ringleaders were Macedonians employed by the Committee, and informed me that he had caused a certain number of these—ten or twelve, if I mistake not—to be removed into the interior of the country, one of the persons thus "interned" being a young female teacher in the Communal School at Chepelaré, a town which, from its nearness to the frontier, is apparently a recognized rendezvous for the members of the marauding gangs.

On my pressing him regarding the transport of arms across the frontier, he admitted that he believed small quantities were from time to time conveyed into Macedonia, and told me that he had visited a spot near Chepelaré, where he had been present at the seizure of a number of rifles stored in a wooden shed, which serves as a shelter for the insurgents. He did not, however, seem to think that many men had penetrated into Turkish territory, the watchfulness and energy of the Ottoman soldiery having taught even the most ardent spirits the value of salutary discretion.

In connection with the above, I should mention that Vulcho Andonoff, the Macedonian Voïvoda, whose arrest I reported on the 10th ultimo, was subsequently released by the Examining Magistrate here on the plea of want of *primâ facie* evidence, and it was only on the urgent representations of M. Manoloff that authorization was granted to have him put under police surveillance, a measure the opportuneness of which has now been justified by a letter from the Ministry of the Interior, which the Prefect read to me to-day, enjoining renewed vigilance on the part of the police, it having come to the knowledge of the Government that the said Andonoff is in communication with several individuals who are planning an incursion into Macedonia at an early date, and have already dispatched a supply of arms from Sophia.

The general impression which I have derived from my conversations with the Prefect and other persons does not, however, lead me to apprehend an impending insurrectionary movement on the Turkish side of the frontier, for the Macedonians, while reluctant to own to a temporary discomfiture, are evidently alive to the undesirableness of coming within range of Turkish rifles, and have, therefore, to content themselves with the more cheaply won glory of living on plunder obtained at the expense of the Mussulmans on this side of the frontier.

On the other hand, it is clear that the administrative and military authorities are unable, and only partially willing, to maintain order in the border tracts; and, notwithstanding M. Manoloff's expressions of confidence in the results of his mission, I cannot help thinking that the present demoralization among all classes of Government officials in the Rupchos district might prove a serious danger in the event of untoward incidents on the frontier.

No. 52.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 19)

My Lord, *Sophia, June* 12, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 7th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul

at Philippopoli, reporting the escape of the Voïvoda Andonoff, who was under surveillance on account of his supposed intention to lead a raid into Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Vice-Consul McGregor to Mr. Elliot.

(Extract.) *Philippopoli, June* 8, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 5th instant, I have the honour to report that Vulcho Andonoff, who was hitherto under police surveillance on account of his supposed intention to place himself at the head of a raid into Macedonia, has escaped, and the authorities are without information as to his whereabouts.

In M. Manoloff's opinion there is little doubt that Andonoff has made his way to Chepelaré, and this supposition is further strengthened by the fact that a Turk in whom the Prefect has confidence has just written to him from that place, informing him that a band of twenty-five armed men has been seen proceeding towards the frontier. M. Manoloff has reported the occurrence to the Minister of the Interior, and has also written officially to General Velcheff, commanding the division here, pointing out the necessity for inquiring into the conduct of the frontier guards where discipline must be very lax if it is the case that the soldiers take an active part in the depredations daily committed upon the flocks and herds of the Mussulman inhabitants.

There is, I believe, a notable contrast between the state of things on the Rupchos frontier and that in the Chepino district, where the military authorities are fulfilling their duties with commendable zeal and success.

No. 53.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 24.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, June* 17, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 10th May, I have the honour to report that the energetic remonstrances of the Servian Government have had the result of inducing the Porte to take measures for the maintenance of order on the frontier.

The appointment of Hamdi Pasha is announced as a Special Commissioner to investigate the recent occurrences on the Servian frontier as well as the conduct of the frontier guards.

Hamdi Pasha is also stated to have received authority to replace these guards, if necessary, by others, and to take all further measures which may be considered necessary to prevent the recurrence of frontier troubles.

These troubles, I understand, are, in a great measure, due to the conduct of the police or Gendarmerie, to whom the duty of guarding the frontier has hitherto been intrusted. Their strength being insufficient, they are apt to betake themselves to the villages, while their absence is taken advantage of by Servian and Albanian smugglers. The substitution of regular troops for Gendarmerie has constantly been advocated by the Porte, which is stated to be quite willing and able to carry out the change. The difficulty, as I am informed by the Austrian Military Attaché, rests with Servia, whose army is not constituted in such a manner that troops can easily be detached for frontier service.

According to semi-official information from Vienna, the representations made by Servia at Constantinople will, if necessary, be supported by the Austrian Government, and in all measures for the maintenance of peace and order, or for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkan Pensinsula, "Servia may rely upon the support of Austria."

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 54.

Sir N. O'Conor to The Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 25, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 6th February last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from the British Acting Consular Agent at Janina, reporting on the movements of an Albanian band under the leadership of Malik Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 54.

Mr. Millelire to Consul-General Freeman.

M. le Gérant, *Janina, le* 12 *Juin*, 1901.

IL paraît que Malik Bey, duquel j'ai déjà eu l'occasion de vous entretenir maintes fois, a voulu tenir sa promesse.

On annonce de Metzovo que Malik Bey, à la tête d'une centaine et plus de palicares, a passé la frontière à Cucioflani, ayant divisé ses hommes en cinq compagnies.

Cucioflani est un village près de Metzovo, qui appartenant à la Grèce avant la dernière guerre, a été, par la délimitation faite par les Commissaires Européens, de nouveau restitué à la Turquie. Maintenant ce village n'est pas habité, la population s'étant retirée, plutôt que de changer de nationalité. Il n'y a dans le village que trente soldats réguliers Ottomans, sous le commandement d'un Sous-Lieutenant. On assure qu'au passage de Malik Bey, le Sous-Lieutenant ayant réuni ses hommes, ordonna d'ouvrir le feu, mais que les soldats étant tous Albanais se refusèrent nettement. Malik Bey a ainsi passé facilement la frontière, et son but paraît être le Caza de Préméti, où il se rendra probablement en passant par Flamburiari Konitsa Misojofiro. Les hommes qui suivent Malik Bey ne sont pas tous Musulmans, mais aussi beaucoup de Chrétiens.

On ne peut pas nier que Malik Bey étant Bectachi, exerce une grande influence dans son caza, Préméti, dans celui de Kolonia, Progonati, Arghirocastro, où les Musulmans sont tous des Bectachis, et se trouvent des Tékkés, Monastères très riches pour le soutenir, et dont tous les Babas sont ses amis.

Les autorités sont justement préoccupées. Elles ont pris des mesures; des soldats ont été envoyés dans les points stratégiques sur le passage de Malik Bey. Un Major Crétois de Gendarmerie est parti hier avec une centaine de gendarmes, mais le mal est que soit les soldats réguliers, soit les gendarmes, sont presque tous des Albanais de ce district, sur lesquels il y a peu à se fier.

En même temps du passage de Malik Bey on annonce la comparution de plusieurs bandes de brigands, peut-être d'accord avec Malik Bey, pour détourner l'attention de la force publique.

Veuillez, &c.
Le Gérant,
(Signé) G. MILLELIRE.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Janina, June* 12, 1901.

IT seems that Malik Bey, about whom I have frequently had occasion to report to you, has kept his word.

The news comes from Metzovo that Malik Bey, at the head of 100 or more fighting men crossed the frontier at Cucioflani, having divided his men into five bands.

Cucioflani is a village near Metzovo, which belonged to Greece before the late war, and which was restored to Turkey by the delimitation made by the European Commissioners. At present this village is uninhabited, the population having withdrawn rather than change their nationality. There are, in the village, only thirty Turkish regulars, under the command of a Sub-Lieutenant. It is asserted that when Malik Bey passed through, the Sub-Lieutenant turned out his men and ordered them to open fire, but that the soldiers, being all Albanians, refused point-blank. Malik Bey thus crossed the frontier without difficulty, and his destination

seems to be the Caza of Prémeti, which he will probably reach by way of Flamburiari-Konitsa-Misojofiro. Malik Bey's followers are not all Mussulmans, but include many Christians.

There is no denying that Malik Bey, who is a Bectachi, exercises great influence in his own caza, Prémeti, and in those of Kolonia, Progonati, and Arghirocastro, where the Mussulmans are all Bectachis, and where there are Tékkés—very rich monastéries—which can support him, and of which the Babas are all his friends.

The authorities are, with good reason, anxious. They have taken measures: soldiers have been sent to strategic points on Malik Bey's line of march. A Cretan Major of Gendarmerie left yesterday with 100 gendarmes, but unhappily both the regular soldiers and the gendarmes are nearly all Albanians from this district, on whom little reliance can be placed.

Simultaneously with Malik Bey's advance news comes of the appearance of several bands of brigands, perhaps in agreement with Malik Bey, to divert the attention of the police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. MILLELIRE.

No. 55.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, June* 26, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 8th May, I have the honour to report that the Juge d'Instruction has set at liberty all the persons charged with complicity in the Bucharest murders, with the exception of four: Sarafoff, the ex-President, and Kovatcheff, the ex-Secretary of the Macedonian Committee; Troleff, the Head of the fire brigade at Rustchuk; and a man named Stoyanoff. He has completed his report on the case and placed it in the hands of the "Parquet."

The Roumanian Government has officially informed the Bulgarian Government that it is not in its power to allow the persons undergoing sentence in Roumania to be brought to Bulgaria for the purpose of appearing as witnesses at the trial of Sarafoff and his companions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 56.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, June* 26, 1901.

PROFESSOR MIKHAILOVSKY, the new President of the Macedonian Committee, on the 22nd instant gave a lecture, of which the following is a summary.

The Macedonian movement must place restraint upon itself and avoid trials of strength which might easily lead to a catastrophe. The endeavour of the Macedonians must be to show the whole world that they have no Pan-Bulgarian aspirations, and that they are striving simply and solely for the autonomy stipulated by Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin. The Bulgarian Macedonians must work in complete accord with the other races in the province, and convince them that the future autonomy of Macedonia will rest upon the principle of complete equality of all its inhabitants. This is the only way to gain the sympathy of European public opinion for the Macedonian movement and to insure the triumph of the sacred cause. "No aspirations towards union with Bulgaria; complete equality of rights of all inhabitants of Macedonia; political autonomy, with the eventual prospect of a federation of all the Balkan States"—such must be the political creed of all Macedonians The cause of failure, both in Bulgaria and in Macedonia, has been the endless internal party warfare in Bulgaria. In future, a sharp line must be drawn between Bulgarian and Macedonian affairs. A Macedonian who mixes in Bulgarian party politics must keep aloof from the struggle for the freedom of Macedonia, and a Bulgarian who devotes himself

to the Macedonian cause must turn his back upon the internal and external aspirations of Bulgaria.

M. Mikhailovsky is said to intend to undertake a lecturing tour in Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 57.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 8.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July 2, 1901.*

I INQUIRED of the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday what truth there was in a statement I had seen in a foreign newspaper to the effect that, at the instance of the Russian Ambassador, a Commission was about to be sent into Macedonia to inquire into the condition of affairs in that province.

Tewfik Pasha repled that, owing to several complaints received at the Palace from the officials and inhabitants of various districts, the idea of appointing a Commission of Inquiry had originated with the Sultan, but that it was in no way due to any representations made by M. Zinovieff, whose only recent references to Macedonia had been to urge the Imperial Government to keep within the law and the bounds of humanity in repressing any insurrectionary attempts directed against the Government.

His Imperial Majesty had instructed the Council of Ministers to select and recommend members of three Commissions—the one administrative, the second financial, and the third judicial—with a view to the careful examination of the mode and manner in which these several functionaries were exercising their authority, and to the redress of such abuses as were shown to exist. The members of each Commission had accordingly been chosen and recommended to the Palace, but the Imperial Iradé had not yet been promulgated, and his Excellency was unable to say when the Commissions would begin their labours.

I said that the execution of this project would give general satisfaction, provided the members of the Commission inspired confidence. I added that the measures seemed highly expedient in the interests both of His Majesty the Sultan and the Ottoman Government, and that I hoped that his Excellency would give it all the support he possibly could.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 58.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 13, 1901.*

THE Greek Chargé d'Affaires called some days ago and stated that his Government were alarmed at the state of affairs in Macedonia, and would be glad if your Excellency could be instructed to join in representations to the Porte as to the necessity of taking measures for the preservation of order.

The most recent reports received from you on the condition of Macedonia have not indicated the existence of any urgent cause for alarm, and although disturbances have been reported from Albania and Novi Bazar, the first accounts appear to have been exaggerated, and order has been restored without much difficulty. I note also from your Excellency's despatch of the 2nd instant that the Sultan has appointed a Commission to investigate the situation on the spot.

Your Excellency is, however, authorized to join in any representations on the necessity of adequate measures for maintaining order which the Ambassadors of the other Powers may be instructed to make.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 59.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 21, 1901.*

WITH reference to press reports of recent disturbances between Servians and Albanians, I have received the following telegram from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub:—

"On the 17th instant my Russian colleague left for Pristina, with the object of inquiring into the Servian troubles. At Mitrovitza, he became involved in a quarrel with Albanians, and is now confined by them in the Servian School-house, where he and the Servian Vice-Consul have been obliged to take refuge.

"The local Commandant is still absent, having started yesterday morning to release them."

No. 60.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July 15, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 25th May, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, giving an account of the organization of the Bulgarian Committees in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 60.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July 5, 1901.*

THOUGH there is apparently a momentary lull in the proceedings of the Bulgarian Committees in Macedonia, it should not be supposed that the recent measures taken by the Turkish Government have to any appreciable degree discouraged them from pursuing their course of active intrigue. Indeed, they boast that of all the men arrested and condemned in this and the neighbouring vilayets, not a single one was a real "Comitaji," all being peasants who had merely assisted them in a secondary capacity.

I have lately succeeded in ascertaining, from a source which I consider most trustworthy and, especially, completely impartial, some details concerning these "Comitajis" in the districts of Ghevgheli and Doiran, which, since these districts are known to be the centre of Committee propaganda, may be taken as representing the state of things all over Macedonia.

Bulgarian agents are told off—most of them, my informant thinks, but is not sure, from Sophia—to recruit each a band of ten men, of whom he takes command. They make the mountains, where they are out of the reach of the Gendarmerie, their base, descending thence occasionally to scour the villages in search of adherents to their cause. They hold up to the peasants a picture of the Virgin and a dagger, making them kiss each and swear fidelity to the cause, and warning them that should they prove unfaithful they will fall by the dagger.

These bands are armed with good rifles, manufactured in Austria, similar to those in use in the Bulgarian army. Each man carries 180 rounds and a small revolver. They are further provided with dynamite bombs, the size of a very big orange. My informant had one of these latter put into his hands, as also one of the cartridges, which was emptied to show him its charge of grey, smokeless powder. They have a stock of uniforms, made apparently of a kind of waterproof material, which, from the description given me by my informant, who examined one, must be of much the same colour as khaki. These uniforms are buried in safe places until such time as they may be required. All agree, however, in saying that no movement is expected this year.

Meanwhile, not being provided with a change of clothes, they rub their bodies with oil, to keep out vermin.

The bands in question seem to exercise no pressure on the peasants, who give in their adhesion to the cause, other than forcing them to supply bread; but they insist on their orders being unfalteringly obeyed, and are pitiless to those who refuse to join them, threatening them with death, and frequently carrying out their threat, as was the case on the 12th ultimo at the village of Fourka, in the district of Ghevgheli, where they murdered two Orthodox Christians and the Moslem village guard.

My informant tells me that the leaders of the bands have, by giving out as their object the amelioration of the condition of the populations, and the introduction of reforms into the country, induced not only non-Bulgarian Christians, but even Moslem villagers, moved by either fear or hope, to side with them.

My informant answered my doubts as to the truth of some of these facts by assuring me that every detail was absolutely correct; that he had spoken with all parties, and seen and handled the objects he mentioned.

If, then, he has not been of set purpose misled—which I consider very unlikely—or if even only part of his information is true, the situation in Macedonia is such as to call for immediate and serious attention before the whole country becomes involved in a state of excitement, which it will be difficult to control without the application of coercive measures on a far larger scale than one would at present suppose necessary.

The number of the Committees' partisans was stated to my informant by Bulgarian "onbashis" (corporals) at 20,000, of whom 4,000 are in Ghevgheli and Doiran. I am persuaded that this is a gross exaggeration, but with this exception I believe all the details given me, the more so that they agree with information I have obtained from other sources, namely, that there are several small bands of Bulgarians, the number of which cannot be ascertained, patrolling the country, and keeping it in a state of ferment, to suit the object they have in view at some more or less future date.

Although your Excellency may have seen the Regulations drawn up by the Bulgarian Committees in Macedonia, and affecting the bands in question, I am taking the liberty, as I find that no copy has been sent to the Embassy, of transmitting one, inclosed for your Excellency's information, as it clearly shows in what spirit the Committees are working.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. BILIOTTI.

P.S.—The inclosed Regulations are the translation of a paper, written in Bulgarian, found on one of the men arrested in the town of Salonica on the denunciation of other Bulgarian prisoners.

A. B.

Inclosure 2 in No. 60.

Regulations of the Bulgarian Committee in Macedonia.

(Traduction.)

TOUTES les bandes armées se composent de Bulgares indigènes d'une certaine région limitée. Ceux-ci exécutent secrètement les ordres donnés par le Président du Comité.

Les devoirs des bandes armées:

Les bandes armées se composent d'hommes munis d'armes fournies par le Comité. Ces bandes sont formées par les Comités Révolutionnaires de chaque district ou village, et reçoivent l'instruction militaire nécessaire à leurs vues. Ces bandes sont indépendantes des Comités et distribuent à leur tour des armes à ceux qu'elles enrôlent et qu'elles gagnent à leur cause. Ces bandes sont chargées par les Présidents des Comités de Révolte de pourvoir aux armements de ceux qu'elles embauchent dans leurs districts et de faire des provisions d'armes et de poudre qu'elles tiennent cachées, et comme ces bandes obéissent aux Présidents des Comités de Révolte, la responsabilité de leurs actes incombe à ces derniers.

Les Comités de Révolte sont tenus à observer les règles suivantes:—

1. Partout où il existe un Comité de Propagande il doit travailler à faire des complots contre l'État et à s'assurer par des inspections et des examens que les instructions des Comités sont bien comprises.

2. Là où il n'existe pas de partisans révolutionnaires, il cherche à soulever les indigènes, ou il compose une bande armée suivant le Règlement. En cas de succès le Président du Comité Central (de Sophia) est prévenu pour donner de l'extension au parti nouveau.

3. Le Comité du district cherche à répandre des idées révolutionnaires parmi les indigènes par des discours et propos incendiaires. Ces révolutionnaires agissent au nom du Comité qui se trouve dans la circonscription.

Les bandes armées sont soumises aux ordres des Comités des régions limitées conformément aux règles suivantes :—

1. Se conformer aux instructions données.

2. Par la persuasion ou par la terreur mettre les personnes embauchées par les bandes à la disposition du Comité.

3. Mettre à mort les personnes désignées par les Comités.

4. Transporter les armes d'un endroit à un autre pour permettre aux Comités de remplir leurs devoirs sans craindre d'être vus et absorber l'attention de l'autorité locale.

5. Chaque bande est à la discrétion des Comités de Révolte qui se trouvent dans leur circonscription. Elle lèvera l'étendard de la révolte sur l'ordre des Comités du district, et ces Comités n'agissent que sur les ordres du Président du Comité à Sophia.

6. Ce sont les bandes qui donneront du courage aux indigènes pendant la révolution, et pour y réussir, les bandes ont besoin de se conformer aux règles suivantes :—

(*a.*) Attirer le peuple à elles par de bonnes manières, de façon que ce peuple soit prêt à faire des sacrifices au besoin.

(*b.*) Mettre dans l'esprit du peuple, par de telles paroles, que toujours les révolutions donnent de bons résultats—en un mot, agir promptement et par tous les moyens pour gagner l'esprit public à leur cause.

(*c.*) Étudier toute la chaîne des montagnes, les passages, et les cols où l'on peut se cacher et obtenir des villageois, par n'importe quelle manière, à leur dire tout ce qui se passe et ce qu'ils entendent autour d'eux.

(*d.*) Les bandes commettent aussi des crimes politiques—c'est-à-dire, qu'elles tuent et se débarrassent des hommes qui les empêchent d'arriver à leur but, et aussitôt elles avertissent Sophia de leurs crimes commis.

Les instructions de toutes les bandes :

Les instructions des bandes seront gardées très secrètement, la plus petite indiscrétion pouvant amener de grands désastres. Ce qu'il y a de plus important, c'est de faire tout son possible pour présenter un visage accueillant par de bonnes mœurs.

Les Comités du district sont obligés de mettre à exécution toutes les prescriptions du Règlement et sont aussi tenus de ne pas les rendre publiques.

Les choses qui concernent la corruption ne seront pas répétées. Les décisions des Comités seront transmises aux bandes par des Inspecteurs, qui seront les intermédiaires entre les bandes et les Comités. Il faut faire grande attention de ne rien laisser entendre aux enfants et aux femmes, parce que ceux-ci ne peuvent pas supporter les poursuites et les peines du Gouvernement. Les jeunes révolutionnaires n'ont pas le droit d'examiner à fond ce qui ne leur convient pas. Pour traiter une question importante ou pour défendre plus ardemment l'attaque de l'ennemi, deux bandes peuvent se réunir, et dans le cas d'une réunion pareille le chef de cette force sera le chef de la bande locale. Mais en tout cas, l'ordre de réunion se donne par le Président du Comité.

Une bande ne peut passer la frontière de sa circonscription sans l'ordre du Président, que si elle est poursuivie ou qu'elle cherche à dérouter le Gouvernement, ou bien pour commettre une grande corruption urgente. En temps ordinaire il n'est pas permis à une bande de dépasser ses limites ; il est également interdit aux différents membres des bandes de correspondre entre eux.

Les vengeances personnelles, les attaques contre des villages, et toute indiscrétion en général dans le but de soulever la révolution est absolument défendue, et ceux qui s'en rendront coupables seront condamnés à mort. Aucun meurtre ne pourra être commis par les bandes sans décision préalable du Comité, sauf ceux inévitables dans un combat accidentel.

Rapport entre les Comités et les bandes :

Les bandes exécutent les ordres des Présidents de leurs districts et obéissent aussi à un agent envoyé par le Comité Central. Dans ce cas elles devront avertir leurs Présidents locaux de tout ce qu'elles sont chargées de faire par ordre de cet agent.

Les Comités des différentes régions exécutent les ordres donnés par le Président du Comité Central à Sophia en faisant agir les bandes qui avertissent les Comités, à la fin de chaque mois, de tout ce qu'elles ont fait, et ces derniers avertissent le Comité Central.

Le Président du Comité d'une certaine région limitée, est obligé de préparer les habits, les armes, les provisions, et tout ce qui est nécessaire à la bande qui se trouve sous ses ordres ; il lui désigne les retraites où elle pourra se cacher et lui ordonne de faire tout ce qu'il faut pour arriver au but de ses intentions.

Les bandes ont besoin de guides, et comme les Présidents des Comités se trouvent la plupart du temps aux villages et aux bourgs, ce sont eux qui suggéreront aux paysans d'aider les bandes. Les communications des nouvelles entre le chef d'une bande et le Président du Comité se feront verbalement ou par écrit, selon le Règlement spécial du Comité.

Pour accomplir un assassinat il faut un ordre écrit du Président.

Les bandes ne doivent pas garder des documents auprès d'elles. Elles les détruisent, et les plus importants sont gardés au dépôt des documents du Comité.

C'est le Comité du district qui tranche les difficultés qui surgissent entre les chefs de la bande et ses compagnons. Quant aux difficultés qui surgissent entre le Comité et la bande elles sont tranchées par le Comité Central de Sophia, et s'il y a simplement une divergence d'opinions on envoie un agent de la part du Comité Central.

Les bandes peuvent changer de place d'après l'ordre des Comités respectifs, mais jamais sans cet ordre. Quant aux ordres de dispersion et de dissolution, ils ne peuvent être donnés que par le Comité Central.

Composition et administration des bandes :

1. Les bandes se composent de cinq ou six personnes.

2 Chaque bande a son chef et son secrétaire, qui sont nommés par le Comité Central à Sophia.

3. Les hommes qui composent les bandes doivent être jeunes et endurcis aux fatigues des montagnes, habitués à mener une vie retirée et être courageux pour remplir leurs devoirs.

4. Ceux-ci doivent être plus intelligents et plus ardents que leurs chefs pour mener à bonne fin les ordres reçus.

5. Les jeunes gens qui s'engagent dans une bande sont nommés par les Comités des districts, avec approbation du Comité Central.

6. Le déplacement d'une bande se fait par les Comités des régions.

7. Les bandes tuent ou lâchent les hommes tombés entre leurs mains après entente avec leurs Comités.

8. Les bandes ne doivent pas rebuter les villageois par leurs exigences. Elles doivent observer une conduite tranquille dans les lieux où elles seront reçues.

9. Elles doivent faire tout leur possible pour gagner la confiance du peuple et passer une vie pacifique avec lui.

10. Ceux qui songeront à leurs propres intérêts ou qui déserteront en cas d'un combat seront exclus de la bande.

11. Ceux qui se rendront coupables d'intrigues ou de ruses seront blâmés publiquement pour leur manquement aux devoirs sacrés qu'ils ont contractés.

12. En toute chose les membres d'une bande ont les mêmes droits.

13. Les conspirateurs n'ont pas le droit d'aller voir leurs parents et leurs alliés sans l'ordre des Présidents de leurs Comités respectifs.

14. Ils doivent cacher toujours leurs noms, les endroits d'où ils viennent, et ceux où ils vont.

15. Personne ne peut sortir de sa bande sous prétexte de réunir une autre bande ou passer à une autre sans l'ordre des Présidents respectifs.

16. En cas de désobéissance le délinquant sera désarmé et mis en prison.

17. Les armes des bandes appartiennent aux Comités, et alors quand une personne quittera la bande sans un motif légitime ses armes seront livrées aux Comités par le Président.

18. Le Secrétaire dirige la correspondance entre les bandes et les Comités, mais toujours par ordre du Président.

19. Le Secrétaire a aussi le droit d'inspecter les bandes avec le Président et s'occuper de donner au peuple une idée révolutionnaire et de leur fournir des armes.

20. Les différends qui s'élèvent entre le peuple et les bandes seront réglés à l'amiable ; il ne faut pas faire usage de mauvais procédés.

21. Pour les fautes graves, telles que le refus de rester de garde à son poste, la désobéissance aux ordres reçus, l'insubordination envers les chefs, les peines sont différentes. Parfois on est condamné à une mission qui peut lui coûter la vie.

La condamnation à mort est prononcée dans les cas suivants :—

1. Quand on divulgue les intentions du Comité ou que l'on a des velléités de trahison dans un but intéressé.

2. Quand on déserte la bande pendant un combat.

Ces arrêts seront aussitôt exécutés. L'arrêt est prononcé par le Comité Régional et approuvé par le Comité Central. En cas d'urgence on peut exécuter le condamné sans attendre l'avis du Comité de Sophia.

(Translation.)

ALL the armed bands will be composed of native Bulgarians of a certain limited region. They will execute secretly the orders given by the President of the Committee.

The following are the duties of the armed bands :—

The armed bands will be composed of men provided with arms supplied by the Committee. These bands will be formed by the Revolutionary Committees of each district or village, and will receive such military instruction as may be necessary. These bands will be independent of the Committees, and will in their turn distribute arms to those whom they enrol and whom they win over to their cause. These bands will be instructed by the Presidents of the Committees of Revolt to provide for the arming of those whom they enrol in their districts, and to form stores of arms and powder, which they will keep hidden ; and as these bands will obey the Presidents of the Committees of Revolt, the latter will be responsible for their acts.

The Committees of Revolt must obey the following rules :—

1. Wherever there is a Committee of Propaganda it must engage in plots against the State, and must assure itself, by means of inspections and examinations, that the instructions of the Committees are well understood.

2. In places where there are no partisans of revolution it will endeavour to rouse the natives, or will form an armed band in accordance with the Regulations. In case of success, the President of the Central Committee (at Sophia) should be informed, with a view to the extension of the new party.

3. The District Committee will endeavour to propagate revolutionary ideas among the natives by means of incendiary speeches and conversation. These revolutionists will act in the name of the Committee of the district.

The armed bands will be under the orders of the Committees of the limited regions, in accordance with the following rules :—

1. They must obey the instructions given to them.

2. They must, by persuasion or threats, place at the disposal of the Committee those persons who are enrolled by the bands.

3. They must kill any persons whom the Committees may order to be killed.

4. They will convey arms from one place to another, in order to enable the Committees to perform their duties without fear of being seen, and to engage the attention of the local authorities.

5. Each band is at the disposal of the C[illegible]ees of Revolt in its district. It will raise the standard of revolt at the comma[illegible] of the Committees of the district, and those Committees will act only on the orders of the President of the Committee at Sophia.

6. It will be the duty of the bands to inspire the natives with courage during the

revolution, and in order to succeed in this it is necessary that the bands should obey the following rules :—

(*a.*) They must attract the people by their good behaviour, in order that the people may be ready to make sacrifices if necessary.

(*b.*) They should impress upon the people that revolutions always have good results, and should act promptly and by all the means in their power in order to gain over public opinion to their cause.

(*c.*) They should carefully examine the whole mountain chain, the defiles and the passes where it is possible for persons to conceal themselves ; and should, by no matter what means, make the villagers tell them all that happens and all that they hear.

(*d.*) The bands will also commit political crimes—that is to say, they will kill and rid themselves of any men who prevent them from gaining their objects. They must at once report to Sophia any crimes that they may commit.

Instructions of all bands :

The instructions of the bands must be kept very secret, as the smallest indiscretion may bring about great disasters. The most important thing is for the members to do all that is possible to ingratiate themselves by their good behaviour.

The district Committees are bound to observe all the directions of the Regulations and are also bound not to make them public.

Things concerning corruption will not be repeated. The decisions of the Committees will be transmitted to the bands by Inspectors, who will be the intermediaries between the bands and the Committees. Great care must be taken not to let children or women hear anything, as they are not able to hold out against the pursuit and punishments of the Government. Young revolutionists have no right to question what they do not approve of. In order to deal with an important question or to resist more strenuously the attack of the enemy, two bands may unite, and in the event of such a union the head of this force will be the head of the local band. But in any case the order for union will be given by the President of the Committee.

A band cannot pass the boundary of its district without orders from the President, unless it is being pursued or is endeavouring to mislead the Government, or else for some important and urgent purpose of corruption. In ordinary times no band is allowed to go outside its boundaries; no correspondence may take place between the different members of bands.

Acts of revenge for personal grievances, attacks on villages, and generally any indiscretions committed with the object of provoking revolution are absolutely forbidden, and any persons who may be guilty of such acts will be condemned to death. Apart from unavoidable slaughter in accidental engagements, no murders may be committed by the bands without the permission of the Committee.

Relations between the Committees and the bands :

The bands will carry out the orders of the Presidents of their districts and will also obey an agent sent by the Central Committee. In the latter case, they must inform their local Presidents of all that the agent instructs them to do.

The Committees of the different regions will carry out the orders given by the President of the Central Committee at Sophia, and will instruct the bands to act. The bands will inform the Committees, at the end of each month, of all that they have done, and the Committees will inform the Central Committee.

The President of the Committee of a certain limited region is bound to get ready the clothes, arms, provisions, and everything that is necessary for the band under his orders ; he will show the band the places where it can conceal itself, and will give it instructions as to the best means of attaining the objects aimed at.

The bands require guides, and as the Presidents of the Committees are generally in villages and small towns, it will be their duty to suggest to the peasants to assist the bands. News will be communicated by the head of a band to the President of the Committee, and *vice versâ*, by word of mouth or in writing, according to the special Regulations of the Committee.

For a murder, an order in writing from the President is required.

The bands must not have papers in their possession. They must destroy them and the most important will be kept in the archives of the Committee.

Any difficulties that may arise between the head of a band and his associates will be settled by the Committee of the district. Difficulties that arise between the

Committee and the band will be settled by the Central Committee at Sophia, and if there is simply a difference of opinion, an agent will be sent by the Central Committee.

Bands may change places by order of the respective Committees, but never without such order. Orders for dispersal and dissolution can only be given by the Central Committee.

Composition and administration of the bands:

1. The bands will be composed of five or six persons.
2. Each band will have a Head and a Secretary, who will be appointed by the Central Committee at Sophia.
3. The men forming the bands must be young and inured to the hard life of the mountains, and they must be accustomed to lead a life of retirement, and to be courageous in the performance of their duties.
4. They should be more intelligent and more high spirited than their chiefs, in order to carry out properly the orders they receive.
5. Young men who join a band will be appointed by the Committees of the districts, with the approval of the Central Committee.
6. Bands will be moved by the Committees of regions.
7. The bands will kill or set free, after consulting their Committees, any men who may fall into their hands.
8. The bands must not alienate the sympathies of the villagers by exactions. They must behave quietly in the places where they are received.
9. They should do all they can to gain the confidence of the people, and to live peacefully with them.
10. Any persons who consult their own interests, or who desert when an engagement takes place, will be expelled from the band.
11. Any persons who are guilty of intrigues or deceitful conduct will be publicly reprimanded for not fulfilling the sacred duties which they have undertaken.
12. All the members of a band will have equal rights in all respects.
13. The conspirators will not be allowed to go and see their relations and friends without obtaining permission from the Presidents of their respective Committees.
14. They must always keep secret their names, the places they have come from, and their destinations.
15. No one will be allowed to leave his band on the pretext of forming another band, or to go to another band without an order from the President concerned.
16. In case of disobedience, the delinquent will be disarmed and imprisoned.
17. The arms of the bands are the property of the Committees, and if a person leaves his band without proper cause, his arms will be handed over to the Committees by the President.
18. The Secretary will conduct the correspondence between the bands and the Committees, but always under the orders of the President.
19. The Secretary will also have the right to inspect the bands with the President, and to work at instilling revolutionary ideas into the minds of the people and supplying them with arms.
20. Any difficulties that may arise between the people and the bands will be settled in a friendly way; there must be no harsh treatment of the people.
21. For grave misconduct, such as refusing to remain on guard, disobeying orders, insubordination, there are various penalties. In some cases a man may be condemned to go on a mission by which he risks his life.

Sentence of death will be pronounced in the following cases:—

1. Divulging the intentions of the Committee or intending to commit treason from interested motives.
2. Deserting the band during an engagement.

The sentence in such cases will be carried out at once. It will be pronounced by the Regional Committee and approved by the Central Committee. In urgent cases the condemned man may be executed without previous reference of the matter to the Sophia Committee.

No. 61.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 22)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 17, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting the abduction of two girls by Mehmed Pasha, Chief of the Gendarmerie in Uskub.

I took an opportunity to bring the contents of this despatch privately to the notice of the Minister of War, who informed me that his attention had already been drawn to the matter, and that as a punishment for these outrages and for other irregularities Mehmed Pasha had been removed to Monastir on half pay. The Minister of War added that several of Mehmed Pasha's subordinates were to be punished, and that his conduct was under consideration at the Porte with a view to requesting the Sultan to allow his name to be struck off the Army List.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 61.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July* 3, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, two copies of a despatch from Mr. V. C. Fontana reporting the abduction of two girls by Mehmed Pasha, Chief of the Gendarmerie at Uskub.

I am informed here that the Jewess in question is a woman of loose morals, that she had had relations with Mehmed Pasha at Salonica, and that his object in abducting her was to convert and subsequently marry her.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 61.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, June* 20, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that great scandal has recently been created in this town by the local Colonel of Gendarmerie, Mehmed Pasha, who also holds the rank of General of Brigade in the Ottoman army.

A Jewish girl, attached to a company of Café Chantant performers now at Uskub, recently attracted the attention of Mehmed Pasha, who frequents the café in question. The Colonel's open advances frightened the girl so much that she fled one evening, and took refuge in a house in the Jewish quarter of the town. Mehmed Pasha, hearing that she had left the café, sent some gendarmes to look for her and bring her to his private residence.

The girl was accordingly dragged from her refuge by the zaptiehs and brought before the Pasha, who struck her in the face with his stick, kept her at his house the whole night, and there violated her. The girl eventually succeeded in escaping from the harem, went straight to the railway station and took a ticket for Salonica. She was stopped, however, by the gendarmes posted at the station, and told that she could not leave until she had paid certain debts she owed in the town. The girl then left the station and ran to the Austrian Consulate close by, and threw herself upon the protection of the Austrian Consul. Thanks to the intervention of the latter, who sheltered and protected her, she was sent to Salonica a few days later. It was ascertained that she owed no money at all.

Upon the evening of the girl's flight from the Café Chantant Mehmed Pasha proceeded with two gendarmes to a Bulgarian peasant's house not far off, where he thought she might have taken shelter, knocked at the door, and demanded admission. The Bulgarian, refusing, through fear, to open the door, the gendarmes broke it down,

and the Colonel, not finding the girl as he expected, snatched up a log of wood, and beat the Bulgarian most unmercifully about the back and shoulders. The man came to me the next day and showed me his back. It was greatly swollen and lacerated, and he had several cuts on the forehead.

A day or two ago another girl was abducted and violated by Mehmed Pasha.

The Colonel and the Captain of Gendarmerie subordinate to him are both habitual drunkards, and are becoming a nuisance to the town. The Colonel's private house is full of white-capped Albanians, who form a kind of bodyguard to their master, and are ready to perpetrate any outrage at his bidding. Peaceable citizens are beaten by the gendarmes if discovered in the street at night—even on a moonlight night—without a lantern. And people avoid passing Mehmed Pasha's house after dark. Mehmed Pasha is known to be habitually intoxicated at a certain hour in the evening, and is then accustomed, upon slight pretext, to beat the whole of his numerous household, excluding, perhaps, the women of his harem. He is, in short, a disgrace to the Gendarmerie and the town of Uskub.

The Vali and the Commandant seem both too timid to interfere with Mehmed Pasha, who is a person of consequence among the Albanians of the Kalkandélé district, where he possessess some property. He was expelled from this vilayet by the late Vali, Hafiz Pasha, and it was only after the latter's transfer to Tripoli that Mehmed Pasha obtained his appointment here. His immediate removal from Uscub is essential to the safety of the citizens, both male and female.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 62.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 22, 1901.*

WITH reference to the incidents related in my telegram of the 21st July, I have received the following from Acting Vice-Consul Shipley at Uskub:—

"Hamdi Pasha, Inspector of Turkish troops on the frontier, left here this afternoon, in consequence, as I am informed, of the concentration of Servian troops, which is reported to be taking place on the frontier.

"There is, however, a rigorous quarantine imposed on arrivals from Turkey."

No. 63.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 24, 1901.*

WITH reference to my telegram of the 21st instant, I learn from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub that the Austrian Vice-Consul has started thence for Prisrend, and that the Russian Vice-Consul left Pristina yesterday for Novi-Bazar

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No. 64.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 27, 1901.*

IN continuation of the reports repeated in my telegram of the 24th instant, I have received the following from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub:—

"According to a telegram received late last night from Novi Bazar, the Albanians in that town are much excited. All shops are shut and troops are required.

"This morning, third battalion was sent thither."

No. 65.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 29.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 18, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 13th February last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub reporting on the trial of the persons implicated in the disturbances which took place at Ishtib early in the year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 65.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, July* 3, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 20th January last, reporting a collision between Bulgarian revolutionaries and Turkish gendarmes at Ishtib, I now have the honour to report the result of the trial at Uskub of twenty-six Bulgarians—some of whom were tried by default—accused of direct or indirect participation in the disturbances in the former town.

The following are the names of six Bulgarians charged with having incited the Ishtib Bulgarians to rebellion after furnishing them with arms and ammunition, and with having committed incendiarism and murder:—

Georghi Deltcheff, formerly Director of the Bulgarian School at Ishtib.
Alexander Zakiroff, of Kiuprulu.
A barber named Dimé.
Stoyan.
Tovan Namon.
Todé Agi Constantin.

Of these the last-named only was arrested, the remainder being tried by default. Evidence was brought to show that on the 1st January last the accused entered the house of the butcher Mishé during his absence, and thence fired upon and killed the following persons, afterwards setting fire to the house in question:—

Nejib, Captain of Gendarmerie.
Ali Effendi, Lieutenant.
Hassan, trooper.
Khalid, Régie colji.
David, fireman.
Two Bulgarians of the town.

Three corporals and three or four civilians are, moreover, stated to have been wounded during the firing.

The evidence in question was derived from the witnesses Yorghi Mitzi, Vantzi Zafir, Captain Ahmed Effendi, Lieutenant Khaïri Bey, Corporal Mehmed Aga, and others, who further alleged that Männlicher rifles and empty cartridges were subsequently found in the ruins of the burnt house.

The following persons were accused of having aided, abetted, or held relations with the six Bulgarians aforementioned:—

Vassil Elia Paschkoff, Director of Bulgarian School.
Dimitri, professor of said School.
Gheorghi Constantin, another professor.
Stoitza Khristo, schoolmaster at Vinitza.
Agi Mita, Moukhtar of Yenikeui.
Toda Sando.
Vané Mita.
Sandoukli Mita.
A proprietor of a han.

Lescovsali Lazo.
Kotzia Ano, wife of the butcher Mishé.
Mishé Boskoff.
Khristo Antzi Yanni.
Khristo Bruseko.
Vantzi Zafir.
Stoyan Mitzi.
Gheorghi Mitzi.
Traïtze Doutzo.

Mishé Boskoff, Kotzia Ano, and Stoyan gave evidence against their associates, and made, it appears, a full confession before the Juge d'Instruction. Khristo Bruseko also confessed his complicity in Mishé Boskoff's guilt. The latter's wife stated that a Martini, with forty-two cartridges, discovered by the police, had been given to her husband by the Director of the Bulgarian School, Vassil Elia Paschkoff, to serve for revolutionary purposes.

Judgment was passed condemning the following persons to the following penalties, based upon Articles 13, 31, 43, 55, 56, 57, and 63 of the Criminal Code :—

Deltcheff, Zakiroff, Dimé, Stoyan, Tovan, and Todé Agi Constantin, to death. Only the last, however, is now in the hands of the authorities.

Kotzia Ano, her brother-in-law, and Traïtze Doutzo (the last-named by default), to thirteen years' penal servitude.

Vassil Paschkoff, Gheorghi Constantin, Sandoukli Mita (by default), and Khristo Bruseko (by default), twelve years' penal servitude.

Agi Mita, Vané Mita, and the han keeper, four years' penal servitude.

Khristo Antzi, Dimitri Nientzi, Stoitza Khristo, and Mishé Boskoff, to six years' penal servitude.

Stoyan and Tossé Traïtze, three years' penal servitude.

The rest of the prisoners were acquitted.

A number of the condemned refuted in Court the statements alleged to have been made by them before the Juge d'Instruction, and denied that they had ever made such statements, which were tantamount to a confession of their guilt. A large number of witnesses were called on behalf of the accused, but their evidence was so conflicting and involved as to render any clear appreciation of its value most difficult. It is, however, to be noted that the Public Prosecutor demanded, on behalf of the Crown, the acquittal of certain of the accused, who were, nevertheless, condemned by the Court. And the Ishtib Bulgarians maintain that the house said to have been fired by the revolutionaries was in reality set alight by the gendarmes with petroleum in order to compel the inmates to surrender. And as, in various instances during the Armenian massacres, Armenian houses were fired by the troops with petroleum owing to the inmates' refusal to come forth and be massacred, it is far from improbable that the allegation of the Ishtib Bulgarians is in this case perfectly true.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 66.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 29.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July 18, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting on various cases of brigandage and political crime which have occurred in that vilayet during the month of June last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July 7*, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report the following cases of brigandage and political crime which occurred in this vilayet during the past month of June :—

On the 12th ultimo the authorities of the Caza of Avret Hissar reported that a band of Bulgarians had had an encounter near the village of Isnafché with five gendarmes, under the orders of a corporal and a Police Commissary, and they had all been killed.

The Acting Vice-Consul at Serres reported to me that, on the information of a Vlach shepherd, a squad of Turkish soldiers came up with a band of seven Bulgarians on the Ali Boutoush Mountain, two hours from Serres. Two Bulgarians, including their Chief, Kotcho Krestenlitzali, were killed; the others escaped.

In the village of Fourka, Caza of Doïran, two Christians, Christo Ikmiji and Christo Yovan Arabaji, were murdered by Bulgarians on the 12th ultimo, together with a Moslem, Ali Pehlevan, the village guard. I was told that the two former, who were Orthodox, had been invited to dinner by the leader of the Exarchate party, and were murdered by Comitajis. Five Bulgarians of the village of Boganza and one of that of Fourka have been arrested on suspicion.

A well-known Greek brigand, called Georgi Dimopoulo, attacked, in the middle of last month, the farm of Mikhalaki Bey, formerly member of the Council of State. The farm, which is situated near Cassandra, was so stoutly held by the steward and a gendarme who took part in its defence, that the brigands had to set fire to it before the former surrendered. The steward was decapitated. The outrage is supposed to have been an act of vengeance.

Soldiers and gendarmes sent by order of the Vali came in touch with them, three soldiers and one brigand being killed, while three others were wounded and subsequently murdered by their comrades to prevent their falling into the hands of the gendarmes.

A band of Bulgarians in the vicinity of Kilindir murdered two Christians in a mill some days ago.

In the same Mutessariflik, Caza of Melenico, at the village of Kalivia (or Loupovo), exclusively inhabited by Vlachs, the notorious Bulgarian brigand chief (and also, it is supposed, Comitaji) Dontcho, with a band of twenty-five followers, killed the Kahaya Stergio Bouloubashi and two others, burnt down his house, and carried off to the mountains four persons belonging to well-to-do local families. Their fate is unknown. This man is the same Dontcho who, at the head of twenty men, murdered four of Mr. Bizzo's men at Microvo. The murder of the Vlach by Dontcho may, I think, have been an act of revenge for the denunciation of the seven Bulgarians by the Vlach shepherd, as mentioned above.

I understand, too, that the Bulgarians have an old-standing grudge against the Vlachs of that district, the latter having a few years ago acted as guides to the Imperial troops, and having caused the capture and death of many Bulgarians.

The Acting Vice-Consul at Serres reports further that, on information given by a gendarme that brigands had been seen on the hills close to the town, a strong detachment of mounted police had been sent to look for them.

The Bulgarian Commercial Agent has informed me that on or about the 25th ultimo a Bulgarian named Dimitri Georghieff Tominoff, of the village of Gegovan, in the Caza of Langaza, was invited to a wedding in the neighbouring village of Klepalo, and went accompanied by a Turk. Ten days after his body was discovered between these two villages.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 67.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 29.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 19, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, giving an account of an affray between Montenegrins and Albanians at Gussinjé, on the Montenegrin frontier, an incorrect account of which has reached the London press through Reuter's Agency here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, July* 7, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that a Reuter's telegram from Constantinople, published in the "Daily News" of the 2nd instant, states that a serious encounter between Christians and Albanians had occurred at Gussinjé, near the Montenegrin frontier, in which seven Christians were killed and one wounded. I hear, however, from a reliable Christian source in this town that the affair was in reality as follows :—

Three Montenegrins (Turkish subjects) attacked and killed an Albanian miller of a certain village near Gussinjé. The three Montenegrins were afterwards set upon and killed by the murdered man's relatives, one of whom was subsequently killed by another Montenegrin, who in turn was shot by his victim's brother.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 68.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 29.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 20, 1901.

I LEARN that representations have been made at the Palace by the Russian Embassy and to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of the Interior by the Servian Legation, respecting an affray which is reported to have occurred some days ago in Turkish territory near the Servian frontier between some Albanian irregulars, together with a force of Turkish gendarmes and the inhabitants of some Servian villages in the Kolashin district.

I have not been able to obtain full particulars of this occurrence, but it appears that the gendarmes and the Albanians visited the villages under the pretext of searching for arms, and that their violent methods provoked resistance and led to bloodshed.

In reply to the representations of the Servian Legation, both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of the Interior denied all knowledge of the incident. I understand that the Russian and Servian Consuls at Prishtina have proceeded to Mitrovitza to inquire into the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 69.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 30.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, July* 26, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that Hamdi Pasha, the Turkish Commissary-General on the frontier, arrived in Belgrade on Monday last. He is accompanied

by Colonel Brankovitch, the Servian Commissary-General. Their arrival at the present juncture has naturally given rise to various conjectures, and it has also caused the Russian Minister to defer his departure on leave of absence.

Dr. Vouitch, on my alluding to the matter yesterday, did not appear to attribute much importance to the visit, saying that the frontier questions had practically been arranged on the spot between the two Commissaries-General who had been over the ground together before their arrival in Belgrade, and that matters there were in fact tranquil.

As regards disturbances in Old Servia at Kolashin, referred to in my previous despatches, he mentioned with satisfaction that the Sultan, in consequence of pressure put upon him at Constantinople by M. Zinovieff, had sent explicit orders that the search for arms, at all events in the manner hitherto adopted, which had been the origin of the difficulties, must be abandoned; that the Servians at Kolashin and elsewhere, who had suffered wrong and taken refuge in the mountains, should be reinstated in their homes; and finally, that a notorious Albanian Chief named Issa Boletinatz, who has, I understand, been in a great measure responsible for recent disturbances, should no longer be employed.

Hamdi Pasha, who was formerly Turkish Military Attaché in Belgrade, is to be received in audience by the King at Semendria on Sunday next. Further light on the object of his visit will doubtless be shortly forthcoming, and it may be expected that the report of the Russian Consul at Uskub, on recent occurrences on the frontier, will serve to furnish further reliable information on the state of that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 70.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 5.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July 25, 1901.*

ABOUT ten days ago the Bulgarian Agent, M. Gueshoff, called upon me and upon the Russian, and, I believe, also upon some other Ambassadors, to ask our good offices in regard to the condition of the prison at Salonica, in which many Bulgarians were confined for political offences.

He stated that the overcrowding and insanitary condition was such that the sickness and mortality were very great, and in the name of humanity he asked that I should make such representations to the Sublime Porte as I considered most conducive to procure an amelioration in the existing condition of the prison.

I said that I would at once refer to His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica for a report, and if the statements he made were confirmed by Sir A. Biliotti that I would not hesitate to bring the matter to the notice of the Imperial Government.

I have now the honour to inclose to your Lordship a despatch from Sir A. Biliotti on the subject, from which it appears that Tewfik Bey is anxious to do all in his power to improve the sanitary condition of the prisoners. Under these circumstances, I think that no useful object would be gained by making representations at this moment to the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 70.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July 17, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that in an interview which I had with the Vali ten days ago, I left with him the Petition handed to the Consular Body by the Bulgarian prisoners, on his expressing a wish to know its exact contents.

In a subsequent interview which I have just had with his Excellency, he was good enough to give me the following particulars concerning the prison. On his arrival here the total number of prisoners was about 900. Of these 71, among whom a few Bulgarians,

have been set at liberty on the 25th June, anniversary of the Prophet's birthday, and 120, mostly Bulgarians, are to be sent shortly to the prisons of Rhodes, Boudroun, and St. Jean d'Acre. But nearly 100 fresh prisoners having been incarcerated, the total is now about 800.

In the Petition handed to the Consuls, the Bulgarian prisoners especially complained of—

1. Overcrowding;
2. The generally filthy condition of the prisons;
3. The disgraceful state of the water-closets;
4. That many sick prisoners were not duly attended to for motives of economy; and
5. That a number of Moslem prisoners were allowed to keep their knives, which were a menace to the lives of the Christian prisoners.

The Vali confessed that the first three points are confirmed by facts. His Excellency ascertained that the prisons, which contain 800 inmates, have space for only half that number, at most for 500. He proposed that "Beyaz Koulé" or the "White Tower" where there is spacious accommodation, should be utilized as a prison.

Since, however, he is unable to take such a step on his own initiative, he has applied to Constantinople for permission to carry out his suggestion which he has not yet been authorized to do.

Meanwhile he has caused the prisons to be cleaned as far as the overcrowding permits at present. The water-closets have also to be transferred elsewhere. All these improvements will require some time, but his Excellency appears decided to carry them out as soon as circumstances allow him to do so. Tewfik Bey told me that there was no foundation whatever with regard to the fourth point; and that the truth about the fifth point is that, after a thorough search in the prison, two knives were discovered which had been concealed in the earth or beneath stones by the prisoners.

The number of Bulgarian prisoners condemned during the recent trials, which amounted to 114 (117 according to the list supplied me by a Bulgarian Notability—the discrepancy of three may be accounted for by the number of those tried by default), is now reduced to 112 in consequence of two deaths which have occurred since their incarceration. The Bulgarians knew only of one death ten days ago, the second death having taken place since that date. Of the Bulgarian prisoners previous to the last trials there are 185, giving at the present moment a total of 297, about one-third of whom will be sent to other prisons (Rhodes, Boudroun, St. Jean d'Acre), leaving in round figures 200 in the Salonica prisons. From information received to-day I learn that the prisoners condemned to death (whose sentence was confirmed by the Court of Cassation) are to be all sent to some of the fortified places mentioned, away from Salonica. In view of the fact that the Imperial Iradé required for the execution of capital sentences has not yet been issued, and that such sentences must be executed on the spot where the trial and crime took place, it would appear that there is a certain possibility of reprieve for those condemned to death.

I suggested to the Vali that it would be interesting to find out the percentage of mortality in the present condition of the vilayet (which, he thought, was now about 2 per 1,000 per month), in order to compare it with the mortality after the improvements which he is carrying out, and his Excellency appeared inclined to do so.

My impression is that Tewfik Bey has the best intentions with regard to sanitation and other improvements in the prisons at Salonica, and that unless hindered by circumstances beyond control, he has the determination necessary to carry out his resolve.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 71.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July 29, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting further on recent cases of brigandage and violence in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July* 20, 1901.

IN continuation of my despatch of 7th July, I have the honour to report that the detachment in pursuit of Captain Georghi and his band lost trace of them in the vicinity of Cassandra, and I have ascertained from a Greek monk, who came a few days ago from Mount Athos, that the rumour, which has been in circulation since a few days, to the effect that the band in question crossed over to Greece in a boat from that locality, is borne out by the fact that a fishing-boat belonging to the monasteries disappeared on Sunday, the 7th July, after the nets and other fishing gear had been landed and left on the sea-shore. The Acting Consular Agent of Serres reported to me on the 9th instant (and this has been confirmed to me by the Vali) that a detachment of Turkish soldiers was shown the hiding place, in Perin Dagh, of eighteen Bulgarian brigands, under the notorious Dontcho, by some peasants of the locality. It appears that Dontcho claimed a heavy ransom for the peasants kidnapped at Lopovo (Kalives). The troops came upon the band during the night, and managed to deliver the prisoners, but not before two of them had been murdered by Dontcho, who fled with his associates, leaving their effects on the spot. The band has been dispersed, and it is believed that the chief has been wounded.

Yesterday, in conversation with the Vali, I suggested that local guards, called "Paganas," such as have been established with most satisfactory results in the southern district of Caterina, should be established also in other parts of the vilayet. The "Paganas" consist of from six to twelve men, recruited in each centre, according to the importance of the locality, who are given arms by the Government, and are paid by the population. These men, being natives, have a direct interest, other than mercenary, in the security of the district, which involves that of their families and property.

Brigandage, previously rife in that part of the country, has entirely ceased since the creation of these local guards. Tewfik Bey told me that his attention had been given to this institution, which he had under serious consideration. I have some reason to believe that the Imperial Government has some objection, not without reason, to giving arms in all parts of the vilayet; but in the districts west of Salonica, such as Cassandra, where Captain Georghi committed his last act of brigandage, the system of "Paganas" may be successfully and without danger employed, as on the Greek frontier.

On the 10th instant, a band of twenty-five Bulgarians having made its appearance in the district of Ghevgheli, near the village of Bayaltza, a detachment of soldiers was sent against them, but has not yet succeeded in coming up with it. Since that date there has been an encounter with a Bulgarian band of seven, who had killed some Soubashis; some of the band were killed, the remaining seven making good their escape. On information given me I had submitted to the Vali, three or four weeks ago, that a certain Moussa Chaoush was compelling the peasants, mostly Bulgarians, of the village of Gerbavetz, in the Caza of Tikvish, to work without wages at the construction of a tower, a house for himself, and practising other extortions. Tewfik Bey, having ascertained that there was *primâ facie* evidence against this individual, who appears to be a notoriously bad character, has caused him to be imprisoned while an inquiry is taking place as to his conduct and proceedings.

There have been lately a few murderous attacks on Bulgarians, consequent upon contested ownership of land between them and Turkish Beys, especially in the Cazas of Tikvish and Vodena. The attacks, of which the Bulgarians are the object, consist in allowing them to plough and sow the contested land without opposition on the part of the Bey, but shooting at them when they approach the fields to gather the crops. This happened in the Kavaden Caza of Tikvish, where Shukri Bey's men shot at and wounded Alexander Temelkoff Chuste Tanoff, and a girl called Maria Ghedrava. On the 20th (2nd) instant the Soubashis of Suleiman Bey, in the village of Messimer (Caza of Vodena), shot at and killed the brothers Glegi and Christo Chanoff. The murderers have taken to the mountains.

I have mentioned these cases to the Vali and the Defterdar, and they both agreed with me that these are two distinct questions, one of which should be settled at once. Even admitting that the Bulgarian peasants have no right of ownership whatever over the land, their having ploughed and sown the fields with their own ploughs and seed entitles them to a share in the produce, and the authorities intend to act on this

principle, leaving to a later date the more difficult question of the ownership, both parties being in possession of title-deeds, on one side local, on the other Firmans.

Anton Balgieff, the Bulgarian priest of the village of Dalno Koufalovo (Caza of Salonica), has been the victim of violence at the hands of Husin Bey's Soubashis, in the course of which his leg was fractured. The priest was sent for to help in threshing the Bey's corn, and was struck with the butt of a rifle for not answering at once to the summons. The case has been submitted to the local Tribunals, who ascertained the facts and have the case under trial.

As the local authorities understand perfectly that any real grounds for complaint given to the Bulgarians, above all at the present juncture, may be used as a pretext for political intrigue, and as they are well disposed, I hope measures will be taken to prevent the recurrence of acts of violence of the nature of those above-mentioned.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. BILIOTTI.

No. 72.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 5.)

(Extract.) *Therapia, July 30, 1901.*

FROM my despatch of the 20th instant, and subsequent telegrams from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, your Lordship will have learnt that the condition of affairs at Kolashin and Novi Bazar was very disturbed, and causing a good deal of anxiety as to the general tranquillity of the district.

Upon my inquiring of Tewfik Pasha on the 28th instant what news he had from those parts, and what was the nature of the representations which the Russian Ambassador was reported to have made on the subject at the Palace and the Sublime Porte, his Excellency replied that the latest accounts showed that the excitement had subsided, and that, though there was still some effervescence both in Kolashin and Novi Bazar, there had been no serious disturbances for some time.

The representations made by the Russian Ambassador were to the effect that the recent action of the Albanians and Turkish gendarmes was characterized by violence for which the leaders ought to be punished, that measures should be taken to protect the Christian population, that the Servian prisoners should be released, and that the arms which had been taken from them, and which were necessary for their legitimate defence, should be given back. It was also desired that the Albanians Issa and Jellal, who had been the promoters of the attacks upon Christians, should be sent away.

The Imperial Government had, the Minister said, showed its readiness to comply with these demands, and reinforcements of regular troops had been sent to the district to maintain order.

I impressed upon his Excellency as strongly as I could the serious danger to the Empire of allowing suppressions of revolt and disturbances to be attended with cruelty or outrage. I pointed to the frequency of disturbances in other parts of Macedonia, somewhat similar to those at Kolashin, as a dangerous system of unrest, which might at no distant date be followed by general disorder and even insurrection if no efficacious measures were taken to protect the Christian population from the attacks of their Moslem compatriots and the ill-treatment of the Turkish gendarmes. I urged that the Sultan's idea of appointing a Commission composed of members who would inspire confidence for their honesty and integrity, and inquire into the complaints of the Christian inhabitants and the general administration of the province, should not be allowed to drop.

Tewfik Pasha replied that the Council of Ministers had sent in a list of members for the Commission, and that the matter was now at the Palace awaiting the Sultan's decision. He believed there had been a marked improvement in the condition of affairs in Macedonia of late, and the Imperial Government was animated with the strongest desire to remove all cause of legitimate complaint on the part of the Christian population. He could not, however, help thinking that the disturbances at Kolashin had been considerably exaggerated.

No. 73.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 30, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a telegram which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting the murder at Dibra of Colonel Nouri Bey, who was sent last February to induce the local Beys to assent to the establishment of Turkish Courts of Justice in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Salonica, July* 26, 1901.

MR. PISSURICA, our Dragoman in Monastir, reported to me on the 24th instant, in a letter which I have just received, the following :—

In February last one of the Sultan's Aides-de-camp, named Nouri Bey, was sent to the Vilayet of Monastir with the mission of inducing the Dibra Beys to consent to the re-establishment of Turkish Courts of Justice. On the 20th instant he was shot dead by a nephew of Hamid Bey, who managed to escape.

Dibra is in great excitement. The enemies of the family of the murderer having decided to burn his house in sign of disapprobation of his crime, and his own partisans being ready to oppose them, while condemning the deed of their relative, it is feared that this murder will be the cause of an increase of disturbances and of much bloodshed in all places where there are members of the two rival parties.

No. 74.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 5.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 31, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 20th instant and yesterday respectively, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch from the Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting on the situation of Old Servia.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 74.

Acting Vice-Consul Shipley to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

(Extract.) *Uskub, July* 19, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Mashkoff, Russian Vice-Consul at Uskub, left two days ago for Mitrovitza to investigate the recent troubles in that and other districts, in consequence of which a considerable number of Servians have been arrested and put in prison.

Some nine months ago, as I am informed, the Albanians on the Montenegrin frontier were very much alarmed by the discovery that arms were being imported from that country and distributed among the Christians. Most of them were apparently discovered, and the matter ended with a disclaimer on the part of the Montenegrin Government, and the return to Montenegro of the confiscated weapons.

The Albanians, however, do not seem to have recovered from the nervous condition

into which they had been thrown, and some three months ago they petitioned the Government to again institute the search in the Christians' houses for arms, which this time, they asserted, were being imported from Servia.

In consequence of this the schools in Prishtina, Prizrend, and Voulchitrin were subjected to a search which resulted in the discovery of, the Servians say one, the Turks several, national songs commemorating the battle of Kossovo, which the authorities regarded as meant to inflame a revolutionary spirit of revenge in the school children. Four masters and a number of mistresses were arrested.

In the meantime a letter from the head-master of the Servian school at Prishtina, the governors of which are resident in Belgrade, to the latter, asking them for funds, was intercepted by the local authorities and gave rise to suspicions which led to the arrest of the head-master.

The result of these arrests was, according to the Servian Consul-General, to rouse the Albanians to a general state of uneasiness, which was further increased by professional agitators, whose means of livelihood are considerably augmented by any trouble between the Albanians and Christians. They insisted on further arrests, which were made as a measure of precaution, the Vali fearing that the Albanians might take the law, as they understand it, into their own hands. The incriminating documents, consisting of one or more national songs and the letter to the Governors of the Prishtina school, as also a few Martini-Henry rifles, were sent here and from here to Constantinople. The Servian Consul-General assures me that the Vali, on seeing these "pièces d'accusation," remarked that a mountain had been made of a mole-hill, and that the provincial authorities had, on the flimsiest of grounds, acted in a manner capable of rousing the Albanians to massacre pitch. There seems to be no doubt that the Albanians were prompted to ask for the interference of the authorities, not only by a desire to make capital out of any trouble which might ensue, but also by downright fear of the Christians, who greatly outnumber them. In any case the affair ended with the release of the Servians imprisoned and the return of the letter to the head-master of Prishtina—both by Imperial Iradé.

Some two weeks ago, however, fresh agitation was set on foot by the Albanians, resulting in the arrest of a number of school-masters and other Servians, as also in the Albanians making raids into a number of Servian houses under the pretence of looking for arms, and stealing anything they could lay their hands on. On the 29th June (12th July), the Orthodox feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Servian Archbishop of Prishtina was singing Mass in the church of that town, previously to ordaining a school-master, when the police arrested the latter, apparently while he was waiting outside the church; and the Bishop, being informed of it, interrupted the service and closed the church in sign of protest.

I have to add that an encounter took place a day or two ago at Kolashin between three armed Servians and some troops.

The former had just crossed the frontier, when they were surrounded and told to lay down their arms. Instead they fired on the soldiers, who retaliated, killing one and capturing the other two, one of whom was slightly wounded.

Though the accounts of the whole matter which I have received from the Servian Consul-General and the Vali differ in little else but the importance each party attaches to the various incidents, there will most probably be additions, if not corrections, to make in this report when M. Mashkoff returns in about a week.

No. 75.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 5.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, July 30, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th instant, I have the honour to report that Hamdi Pasha, immediately after his audience with the King at Semendria on Sunday last, returned to the Turkish frontier without passing through Belgrade.

The object of his visit, as explained to me by the Turkish Minister, has been to make him (Fethy Pasha) more exactly acquainted with the various frontier questions which are of constant recurrence, as well as with those more important incidents which have lately occurred at Kolashin and elsewhere in the interior of Albania. Fethy Pasha took pains to explain to me that Hamdi Pasha's visit is not to be regarded in the light of a mission, and that although he accompanied him (Fethy Pasha) to see the Foreign Minister, it was

only as a subordinate officer, to whom he could refer for information on local and topographical questions. I do not gather that Hamdi Pasha's visit has as yet had any definite result beyond clearing up certain points which may not have been properly understood by the Servian Government.

The Turkish Minister, however, has made strong, but unofficial, representations to the Servian Government for the recall of the Servian Consul at Prishtina, to whose exaggerated reports of recent occurrences he considers the somewhat strained relations between the two Governments are to be attributed. The King, I understand, would not be indisposed to consent to M. Ibramovitch's recall or transfer to another post when an opportunity occurs, but on his side asks for the recall of the Turkish Mutessarif, to which, however, Fethy Pasha is decidedly opposed, on the ground that his conduct has throughout been quite correct.

His Excellency has described to me the two incidents arising out of the search for arms which has recently been the cause of disturbances. They occurred respectively on the 18th June and the 2nd July. On the first occasion the Turkish authorities received information that an attempt was being made to smuggle arms and ammunition into Albania near the Drina frontier. Two horses, laden with arms and dynamite, under the charge of three men, were intercepted and fired upon by Turkish soldiers, one man being killed and one wounded; the third escaped. The second incident occurred at Kolashin, where Issa Boletinatz, an Albanian, who had been instrumental in promoting a contraband trade in arms from Servia, and generally of promoting Servian interests, was accused of treachery by the Turkish authorities, and, in order to save himself, pointed out to them the places where arms were concealed, which led to the subsequent search, in the course of which the alleged outrages took place. These, according to the Turkish Minister, are the grounds on which the sensational reports, for which the Servian Consul at Prishtina is responsible, are founded. A third incident occurred on the 5th July, when a bomb was thrown into the house of a Turkish gentleman of means at Sienitza. The author of the outrage was arrested, and, although he had disguised himself, was ascertained to be a Servian school-master.

From what Fethy Pasha and Dr. Vouitch have said to me, it seems possible that a result of Hamdi Pasha's visit may be the drawing up of a Protocol containing revised Regulations for the maintenance of order on the frontier, and it seems that the idea of mixed patrols of Servian and Turkish guards may be revived.

The previous Protocols of Vranja and Belgrade, which were never ratified by the Servian Government, do not give much hope of a similar one being more successful; but it is satisfactory to find that, in the opinion both of the Servian Prime Minister and of the Turkish Minister, no serious disturbance of the peace is to be at present expected, as the harvest has commenced in both countries, and the elections which are about to take place will occupy the attention of the Servians.

The Russian Minister, who deferred his departure on leave of absence until after Hamdi Pasha's visit, expresses himself as being satisfied with the result, as showing that the Sultan is genuinely desirous of protecting the Christian populations in Albania. He sometimes, however, throws doubts on his ability to do so, in which case, he says, Servia would take warning from the disastrous example of Greece by avoiding war and appealing in the first instance to the Great Powers for the intervention in her behalf, to which he considers she is entitled.

There appears, moreover, to be a general impression that the time of the year for serious outbreaks has passed, and that, making due allowance for the occurrence of the unexpected, a period of tranquillity may be looked for in the immediate future. This view, however, is rather applicable to the relations between Servia and Turkey, and does not exclude the possibility of troublesome incidents occurring in Macedonia as the result of Bulgarian agitation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 76.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 5.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, July* 31, 1901.

WITH reference to my preceding despatch, I am indebted to the Austrian Military Attaché for the following information relative to the career of Issa Boletinatz, the

Albanian whose name has been mentioned in connection with the recent disturbances at Kolashin:—

It appears that in return for a sum of money and presents, consisting of a watch and a valuable pistol, he took the solemn oath of the Brotherhood according to the prevalent Albanian custom, thus binding himself to do all in his power to promote the Servian cause, which he appears to have done by facilitating the introduction of arms and ammunition into that part of the Vilayet of Kossovo, which is sometimes spoken of as Old Servia.

The district of Kolashin in the Valley of the Ibar is mainly inhabited by families of Servian extraction, with whom Issa Boletinatz was in terms of intimacy, as also with the Servian Consul at Pristina and the Russian Consul at Uskub, who have, I understand, been in the habit of staying at his house whenever they have occasion to visit that district.

As the Turkish authorities had reason to suspect that he was concerned in the introduction of arms, they charged him with the offence, on which he said that he had done nothing to implicate himself, but that he knew where arms were concealed. The authorities, acting on this information, conducted a search in which they were assisted by a band of Albanian freebooters in such a manner that the search for arms, which was quite legitimate, became an indiscriminate pillage of houses belonging to the Servian inhabitants.

The extent of these outrages, according to Hamdi Pasha, appears to have been greatly exaggerated, but they undoubtedly caused great anxiety at the time, and, as described in my previous despatch, led to the intervention of the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople.

I understand that Issa Boletinatz is still in the neighbourhood of Kolashin, under the surveillance of the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 77.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 5.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, August* 1, 1901.

TO-DAY being Dr. Vouitch's reception day for the Corps Diplomatique, I asked him if I might congratulate him on the favourable turn which affairs appeared to be taking on the Turkish frontier. His Excellency, whose views are much less optimistic than those of Fethy Pasha, as reported in my previous despatch of the 30th ultimo, could only say that no disquieting news had reached him lately; that the state of the frontier itself was tranquil, but that as regards the position of the Servians in the Villayet of Kossovo itself, he could not help feeling some anxiety.

It appears that the Sultan, in consequence of pressure put upon him at Constantinople, had recalled the Mutessarif of Pristina, but that the populace had insisted on reinstating him. This is precisely what had previously occurred at Novi-Bazar, and is an undoubted sign of weakness on the part of the Turkish Government in dealing with its Albanian subjects. So long as this weakness continues, it is impossible to feel any certainty that there may not be a recurrence of disorder and outrage among this turbulent population.

No. 78.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 5.)

My Lord, *Vienna, August* 1, 1901.

DURING a recent conversation with Count Szécsen I asked him what information he had received as to the recent disturbances in the Sandjaks of Novi-Bazar and Kolashin.

His Excellency replied that from all he had heard he believed that these disturbances had been greatly exaggerated; that the Christians of these districts had been obtaining arms from over the Servian frontier, and that the Turkish authorities had been searching

for them, and in doing so had probably treated the Servian inhabitants roughly, as they usually did on such occasions. He did not anticipate that any serious complications would result.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) M. DE C. FINDLAY.

No. 79.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 12.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 6, 1901.

A DECLARATION published by the "Reformi," the organ of the Macedonian Committee, that the only hope of salvation for Macedonia lies in revolution, has attracted some attention, the more so that Mikhailovsky, the temporary President, has hitherto proclaimed the more moderate creed reported in my despatch of the 26th June.

I think it probable that his increased violence of language is due to the approach of the date fixed for the Macedonian Congress, which is to meet on the 12th instant for the election of a permanent Committee and for other business, unless it is postponed until after the trial and acquittal of Sarafoff and his associates. Mikhailovsky's rival, General Tsoncheff, has been stumping the country energetically, and cannot be allowed to have matters all his own way.

Although the collection of small contributions for the Committee has greatly diminished owing to the action of the Government, blackmail on a large scale continues, especially at Rustchuk and Varna. A fresh murder is also reported from Bucharest, said to be due to the victim's resistance to extortionate demands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 80.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, August* 12, 1901.

MR. SHIPLEY, Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, telegraphs that he learns from the Commandant of Gendarmerie there that an affray between Christians and Turkish soldiers and gendarmes has occurred at Akovo. The former refused to pay the military tax and attacked the troops. Twenty-seven of the latter and twenty-nine Christians were killed and wounded. The Commandant has also informed Mr. Shipley that twenty-one rifles have been handed over to the authorities by the Christians of Bernec.

No. 81.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August* 3, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, giving explanations of the circumstances which led to the murder of Colonel Nouri Bey at Dibra.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 81.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July* 26, 1901.

WITH reference to my telegram of this day, I have the honour to give the following additional information:—

Colonel Nouri Bey, one of the Sultan's Aides-de-camp, had been sent into the Vilayet of Monastir in February last charged with the mission of coming to an understanding with the Albanians of Dibra for the purpose of establishing Turkish Courts of Justice in that district, and above all to watch and report on the movements of the various Albanian parties in that part of the vilayet. It would appear that Hamid Bey was imprisoned in consequence of an unfavourable report lately sent to Constantinople by Colonel Nouri Bey. The name of Hamid Bey's father was Niman Bey, and not Kiazim Pasha, as it was erroneously reported to me previously.

On Saturday evening, the 20th instant, in the middle of the market, a nephew of Hamid Bey, called Hanitze, of the family of Elia Pasha, in connivance with Shukri Bey, another Albanian Bey of some influence, fired twice with a revolver at the Sultan's Aide-de-camp, and killed him outright. Notwithstanding that Nouri Bey was accompanied by a number of his retinue, Hamid Bey made good his escape. In consequence of this murder, which produced an immense impression in Dibra, the condition of that district is becoming very serious, and it serves as a pretext for giving vent to the feelings of animosity existing between the enemies of Hamid Bey and his own partisans.

Salih Pasha, the Mutessarif of Dibra, is a simple spectator of the doings of the rival parties, without being in a position to interfere in any way.

It is, therefore, to be feared that the feud between the Albanian Beys may have many victims, and take larger proportions than ever, in consequence of its being fanned by such foreign politicians as may have an interest in maintaining troubles in Albania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 82.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August* 3, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting that forty Bulgarian prisoners have been removed thence to the Castle of Boudroun, at the entrance to the Gulf of Kos, which Sir A. Biliotti described as one of the most salubrious prisons in Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 82.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July* 23, 1901.

THE sentences issued against the Bulgarians during the first months of the present year, who were convicted of political crimes, having, in some of the cases at least, been confirmed by the Court of Cassation, thirty-eight of those convicted, together with a priest and a professor who had been condemned in 1900 for other offences, making in all forty persons, have been (on the 25th instant) embarked on board one of the Hadji-Daoud steamers, and sent to work out their time in the Castle of Boudroun, which is one of the most salubrious prisons in Turkey, as I had the occasion to ascertain personally when engaged in the excavation of the mausoleum in that place.

Of the 38 prisoners, 23 are professors, of whom 9 are condemned for life, 10 for

seven years, and 3 for five years; 7 are priests, of whom 1 is condemned for life, 4 for seven years, and 2 for five years; a bookseller for life, a doctor for five years, and 6, of various callings, condemned to various periods of detention.

This gives a total of 11 life prisoners, 17 with a sentence of seven years, 5 with five years, and 5 with three years to work out.

These prisoners are, in fact, the most intelligent portion of the convicts, and belonged to the best class of Bulgarian society.

With the exception of the eight priests, who were not shackled, the others were handcuffed in couples side by side. They passed through the bazaar, followed by many Bulgarians, and were unshackled before embarkation.

No incident of any kind took place. They are escorted on board by twenty gendarmes, under the command of a lieutenant, and he is likely to embark with them on board another steamer at the Dardanelles, whither they are bound now. Another batch of about forty prisoners is expected to be soon embarked, but not, as yet, those condemned to death.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 83.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August 4, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, containing an interesting account of the "Puskullu" Corporation of Monastir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, July 27, 1901.*

WISHING to supply your Excellency with full information on all important movements in the Vilayet of Monastir, I have, after a vain search in the archives of this Consulate for a Report to the Embassy on the important subject of the Puskullu Corporation, succeeded in procuring from Mr. Pissurica the following information, which I think of very real interest in the present state of affairs:—

The number and power of the Puskullu Corporation, which correspond to the Bravi of former days in Italy, have greatly dwindled owing to steps taken by Abdul Kerim Pasha, Governor-General of that vilayet, and formerly Mutessarif of Candia in Crete during the disturbances of 1889–90, when I had occasion to speak of his honesty, energy, ability, and intelligence.

In spite of their waning prestige, the part taken by the Puskullus in the troubles at Monastir is too prominent and their exploits too recent to call for special mention. Moreover, the information which I have to give about them is typical of the general condition of the vilayet.

The Puskullus, by race Turco-Albanian, are a class that is gradually disappearing, especially in the towns. They serve as tools to the Beys anxious to clinch vendetta, to get rid of a rival or of a rich Christian co-partner in some property or farm. It is they who collect the tithes due to their patrons, and who provide their or their sons' harem with desirable and attractive girls and boys stolen from the peasants. Never paying a tax or obeying a prohibition against the carriage of arms, the Puskullu will allow himself to buffet any respectable tradesman for refusing to give him credit. It is he who is appointed porter to various Monasteries by the Christian communities as the sole condition of security, for the Puskullu shows a certain fidelity to those who pay him well. He practises murder and smuggling, going to the length of killing Coljis of the Régie, in spite of their being fellow-Puskullus; he will lie in wait at the cross-roads near Monastir for passing merchants to rob, and, if

necessary, to kill. He also gives shelter in his own or a friend's house to any comrade wanted by the authorities. He is, in fine, a type for which fanatical Turks of the old school entertain a special predilection as recalling to their minds the palmy long-lost days of Ottoman supremacy.

They are naturally cordially detested by the Christians.

Their dress, in all else that of ordinary Albanians, is noticeable for the small fez with a heavy silk tassel of great length which reaches down to their shoulders, and from which they derive their name of "tassel-wearers." They take special pride in this distinctive feature. At their waist they carry an axe, and nowadays a revolver also.

Their numbers in Monastir at present vary between 200 and 300. They are mostly unmarried without a settled occupation, but prepared to sell their services to any bidder, regardless of the work required. Meantime, they live from hand to mouth. They never pay for the coffees, raki, or tobacco which they consume, and are fed at the conacks of the Beys.

On arriving at Monastir some years ago Abdul Kerim Pasha, wishing to discredit the Puskullus in the eyes of the population, had the tassels cut off. They were arrested in the streets and taken to the municipality, where the operation was performed, not, however, without discharge of revolvers and a brandishing of axes. A few days later the Puskullus reappeared with as long tassels as before, in defiance of the Vali, and the latter's action was made the subject of a telegram of complaint to some high functionaries at Yildiz, who managed to secure that Abdul Kerim Pasha should abstain from further steps; in spite of this, he placed the Puskullus under police surveillance. In addition to this, he had five of the most influential Beys removed from the vilayet, and the Puskullus, deprived thereby of their protectors, had to moderate their audacity, and took perforce to other pursuits in quest of a livelihood. In this they were materially helped by the Vali himself, who got them employed in preference to others as cavasses in Turkish schools, and watchmen on the railway-line, or workmen in the mines of Coritza, &c. Some of these employments were specially created to provide for them. Under the circumstances, the number of Puskullus following their original calling has greatly dwindled, and continues to do so.

The principal Beys who were removed at Abdul Kerim Pasha's instance from Monastir are Riza Bey, son of Halil Pasha, the father-in-law of Munir Bey, at present Ambassador in Paris (Riza Bey is now at Constantinople—Riza Bey called "Kiuchuk," nephew of the first Nazir of the Régie), transferred to Trebizond; Shakir Bey, a judge, Raïf Effendi, and Mehmed Effendi. All these functionaries enjoyed great influence in the several branches of the Administration, the Tithes Department, the Courts of Justice, &c., and committed all sorts of exactions and injustices, in which they were abetted by the Puskullus, whose prestige has greatly faded in consequence of these removals.

Since then illness and death have nearly completed the work of Abdul Kerim Pasha. Riza Bey's brother Zecheria Pasha, whom the Vali did not dare to remove—the worst of all the malefactors—died shortly afterwards; Izzet Pasha had an apoplectic stroke, and has been for some years past bedridden; while Sadik Bey has gone blind, and lost the use of his tongue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 84.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August* 11, 1901.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 13th February, 26th April, and 25th May, respectively, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting on the result of the trial of the Bulgarians arrested at Kumanova in connection with disturbances which took place at Ishtib in January last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 84.

Acting Vice-Consul Shipley to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, July* 31, 1901.

WITH reference to Mr. Vice-Consul Fontana's despatches of the 22nd April and 21st May, respectively, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a list of the Bulgarians condemned for being implicated in the intrigues of the Committee at Kumanova, together with their sentences, as also of those accused and finally acquitted.

The case presents few, if any, original characteristics. The arrest of one suspected individual led to the arrest of another, and as each one when arrested betrayed some other or others, the police ended by discovering the whole band, not, unfortunately, however, till two of its most important members had succeeded in escaping to Bulgaria.

Before their examination by the Magistrate at Kumanova the prisoners were kept in rigorous isolation, with the result that each man gave independent evidence, which more or less corroborated the accusations made by others against himself and his companions.

On being sent to Uskub they were still kept isolated, and repeated their statements concerning the complicity of their comrades, only slightly varying those against themselves.

But on the day before the trial they were all allowed to see each other and their friends. The visits of the latter had, however, to be stopped owing to its coming to the knowledge of the authorities that the prisoners were concocting evidence with them to prove alibis.

The result of allowing the prisoners to intermingle was exactly the same as at Salonica, viz., a total denial on their part in Court of all the statements they had made to the examining Magistrate, and an assertion that these had been forced from them by the cruel treatment they had received at Kumanova. They did not, however, complain of ill-treatment here, which damaged their case. For the President of the Court asked whether it was possible that beatings the traces of which had disappeared from the body should so far influence the mind of the man beaten that he would give exactly the same answers two months after the ill-treatment, which it was alleged extracted them from him, as those which he gave while actually being beaten or threatened with beating.

The charges against the prisoners were the usual ones: belonging to Revolutionary Committees, importing and distributing arms and revolutionary literature, collecting money and enrolling peasants. The latter are sworn in on the Gospel and made to kiss a dagger and a revolver; they are also forced to buy arms from the Committees.

The Public Prosecutor seems to have conducted the whole case with great fairness as well as skill, entrapping the accused in a perfect tangle of self-contradiction, till at last the less educated of them, who had been prompted by their Chiefs to deny everything, denied all knowledge of their own names, parentage, and actual whereabouts. Even the Bulgarian Agent had to confess to the absurdity of the system of absolute negation when applied by peasants to cross-examination.

His only complaint against the Court was its refusal to allow pleas of alibi, but considering the difficulty of obtaining trustworthy Bulgarian witnesses in such a matter (as illustrated by the following case), the refusal to admit evidence which, if believed, would suffice to clear every Bulgarian accused, is not unnatural. Two of the prisoners in the Ishtib case, I am informed, claimed to be able to prove that they were with friends at the time they were supposed to be attending a meeting of the Local Committee.

These witnesses were called, but on the day that the summons for their attendance left Uskub for Ishtib, the warder who fetched the prisoner's food grew suspicious of a piece of sacking with which the sack he was carrying was patched, though there was no hole, and took the sack to his superiors. These unsewed the patch and discovered a letter in cypher which they succeeded in decyphering, with the help of another cypher communication sent them from Salonica, to which they had the key. The letter was intended for a certain grocer in this town who was to forward it to the "usual person." It informed the latter of the summoning of the witnesses to the alibi and told him exactly to what they were to swear in order to prove it. Their plea of alibi, together with the discovery of the letter, made the case against the prisoners stronger than before, the witnesses of Ishtib testifying to the fact that they had seen them less at home at that time than they usually did.

The Austrian Vice-Consul mentioned a further complaint of the Bulgarians which

he thought justified, viz., that the Turks were not particular as to the exactitude of the evidence or the trustworthiness of the witnesses, so long as they told against the accused. He was also very bitter against the "injustice" of condemning men whose acquittal had been demanded by the Public Prosecutor, a system which he maintains has for its result to make the Judge assume the rôle of counsel for the prosecution.

The charge brought against the gendarme, Stoïmen Yovan, of having sold his rifle to a Comitaji, could not be substantiated, and he was acquitted by the examining Magistrate, though there was a moral certainty of his guilt..

I expressed some surprise to the Public Prosecutor at finding a gendarme accused of complicity, however non-political, with the Committees; but he told me that the Government here was not at all sure of the number of gendarmes, whose profession made secret co-operation with the Comitajis easy. He mentioned the case of the Bulgarian priest at Robovo, in the Caza of Malesh, whose brother was murdered for refusing the 10*l.* demanded by, and reporting the presence of, a band in the village. The priest thereupon informed the authorities of the identity and whereabouts of the murderers. They were surrounded, but only one man was captured.

A few weeks later—*i.e.*, about eight months ago—the same band attacked the priest's house, killed his wife, his mother, and his daughter. He himself escaped to the town of Malesh, where he put himself under the protection of the Kaïmakam, who told him not to leave the town. One night, however, a gendarme summoned him to the konak, telling him the Kaïmakam wanted him on important business; he went out with the man, and was murdered by him and some others who were lying in wait for him. The assassins were caught about four months ago, but are still awaiting their trial.

There seems, on the whole, to be great delay on the part of the authorities in bringing prisoners to their trial. This is all the more regrettable as the prisons at Uskub are shockingly unhealthy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 84.

RETURN of Bulgarians tried at Uskub, June and July, 1901, for Political Intrigues, &c., at Kumanova.

1	Avksenti Gheorgieff, Director of the Bulgarian School at Kumanova ..	Death.*
2	Anghel Golimehoff, schoolmaster	
3	Anton Ilieff, tailor	Imprisonment for life.
4	Anastas Kraleff, of Bailoftza, President of the Committee	
5	Jossé Pop Mikhaïloff, of Palmesh	
6	Tassé Boshkoff	15 years.
7	Stoïtché Lazoff, of Palmesh	
8	Bojine Petkoff, Khanji, at Bailoftza	
9	Stoïan Blajoff, schoolmaster, of Arbanashka	6 years.
10	Dimitri Guiochoff, schoolmaster	5 years' fortress.
11	Aughel Petreff, of Dilbojishta	4 years.
12	Ordé Setchkoff	3 years.
13	Stoïtché Pavloff, Moukhtar	
14	Dimitri Pop Arzoff, schoolmaster*	Acquitted.
15	Stoïan Kostoff	
16	Stoïmen Yovan, gendarme†	
17	M'laden Dimitri†	
18	Bogine Stoïcoff	
19	Stoïtché Kraïloff	

No. 85.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1901.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch of the 17th July last, relative to the abduction of two girls by Mehmed Pasha, Chief of the Gendarmerie in Uskub.

* By default.

† Acquitted by the "Chambre d'Accusation."

I approve your Excellency's action in this matter, and have heard with satisfaction that Mehmed Pasha has been placed on half-pay, and that the desirability of removing his name from the Army List is under consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 86.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1901.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch of the 25th ultimo, forwarding a report by His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica upon the complaints of the Bulgarian Agent at Constantinople in regard to the condition of the prison at that place.

In view of the fact that Tewfik Bey is stated to be making efforts to improve the sanitary condition of the prisoners, I approve your Excellency's proposal to take no action in the matter for the present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 87.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 20, 1901.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch of the 30th ultimo, reporting a conversation which you had with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the disturbed condition of affairs at Kolashin and Novi-Bazar.

Your Excellency's language to Tewfik Pasha on that occasion is approved by His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 88.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 26.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, August* 21, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that the trial of Boris Sarafoff, lately President of the Macedonian Central Committee, Sofroni Stoyanoff, Lieutenant in the Reserve, Vladislav Kovatscheff, ex-Secretary of the Committee, and Dimitri Troleff, all of whom were accused of being the instigators of the Bucharest murders in 1900, was commenced on the 12th instant before the Departmental Tribunal of Sophia, and after lasting for three days, concluded by the delivery of an unanimous verdict of "not guilty."

The case for the prosecution was weakened by the circumstance that, according to Bulgarian procedure, the evidence produced in the Roumanian Court was not admitted, and the Roumanian Government had refused to allow the persons at present undergoing sentence at Bucharest to appear as witnesses. Moreover, there is a strong presumption for supposing that the Juge d'Instruction, charged with the preliminary sifting of the evidence, had not performed his task in an entirely unbiassed spirit (see Mr. Elliot's despatch to your Lordship of the 8th May), a remark which applies equally to the manner in which the Public Prosecutor framed the indictment and presented the case before the Court. In fact, while affecting to dwell on the non-political nature of the task incumbent on the jury, he conveyed in reality quite the contrary impression, and his arguments were on practically the same lines as those employed by the defence, viz., that the verdict brought in by the jurors would involve either the condemnation or the justification of the Macedonian Committee.

Seventeen lawyers representing every shade of political opinion had offered their services gratuitously to Sarafoff and his associates, but only three of these gentlemen

spoke, one of them being Dr. Gennadief, an ex-Deputy and a prominent member of the Stambolist party, and another, M. Pesheff, who was a few months ago Minister of Justice in M. Radoslavoff's Cabinet, and had, in that capacity, assured the Roumanian agency of the resolve of the Government to bring the authors of the Bucharest murders to book.

Throughout the proceedings Sarafoff displayed an arrogant demeanour, and, while denying all participation in the crime, was at no pains to conceal that the object of the Committee is to promote revolution and bloodshed, in order to force the hand of the Great Powers, whom he accused of repudiating their signatures to the Treaty of Berlin. When asked whether he had any remarks to make before the jury retired to consider their verdict, he contented himself with expressing his confidence in an acquittal for himself and his comrades, and then made an impassioned declaration denouncing the infamy of Turkish rule, and concluding with an appeal to all patriots to dissociate the Macedonian question from all Government and Court influence, and to devote themselves with renewed ardour to the accomplishment of their sacred task. He also stated that he did not desire to be re-elected President of the Committee, but was confident that its interests would be safe in the hands of his friends.

On leaving the precincts of the Court, Sarafoff received an enthusiastic ovation from an immense crowd, and, led by a band of music, he was escorted to his house, where he again harangued the mob before retiring.

I have the honour to inclose herewith a summary of the proceedings, which has been drawn up by Mr. Vice-Consul Toulmin.

Inclosure in No. 88.

Summary of Proceedings at the Trial of Boris Sarafoff, ex-President of the Macedonian Committee, and his Associates, Stoyanoff, Kovatscheff, and Troleff, for complicity in the Murders of Cyril Fitowsky and Professor Mihaileano at Bucharest in 1900.

Boris Sarafoff, the principal accused, on being examined, stated that he knew neither the victim, Fitowsky, nor his murderers. He had been once to Bucharest in December 1900, and spent but one night there. The object of his journey there had been to form a branch of the Macedonian Society in that town, which was inhabited by many Macedonian emigrants. He had called together about twenty of them, had exposed to them his mission, prompted by the state of their country, and had appealed to them to aid their fellow-countrymen, first by gifts of money and later by arms. A collection was made and he was promised that a branch of the Society would be established, for the presidency of which he had recommended A. Trifonoff. He had only written one letter to the latter, in which he had sent him receipts to give for any moneys received. The name of the victim was unknown to him till the newspapers had published it after his death.

The only letter which he had written to the President of the Bucharest branch of the Macedonian Society, and which was amongst the evidence, was addressed to the President of the Secret Revolutionary Committee, owing to his friends in Bucharest having told him that they would conduct their operations in secret, since the local authorities were not favourably disposed to the organization of the Macedonians. In this letter Sarafoff had recommended the President of the Society not to lose sight of the "main object;" by which words he meant the organization of the Macedonians in Roumania in case of an insurrection in Macedonia, each one of whom was to have a rallying point and pass into Bulgaria and thence into Macedonia. This was the "main object" to which he had referred in his letter and not murder.

There was also amongst the evidence another letter addressed to the same President of the Bucharest branch of the Macedonian Committee setting forth in cypher a kind of Statute for the extermination of Turkish spies and Bulgarians, who were not in sympathy with the Macedonian movement. Sarafoff denied having written such a letter since the Committee over which he presided had kept strictly within the limits of the law in its operations. He had left with Trifonoff a cypher, but he had had no occasion for using it. Moreover, in his capacity as President of the Committee he had never used a cypher, although he had one in his quality of private individual.

With regard to the telegram sent from Rustchuk by a certain Sofroni to Sophia to a man named Schusheff for Boris S., begging the latter to go to the municipality and ask that passports be given to Ilieff, Mitoff, and Stoitscheff (the murderers of Cyril Fitowsky), Boris Sarafoff denied having received any such telegram or having gone to the

municipality to get permission for the passports to be given, and did not know the persons referred to in that telegram. He owned to having sent persons into Roumania with a mission, but it was to buy arms, and he had sent persons with a similar object to Austria-Hungary and elsewhere.

Sofroni Stoyanoff knew the victim Fitowsky, and could say a good deal about him, but it was not right to speak ill of the dead. He denied having sent the telegram from Rustchuk requesting permission for passports to be given to the murderers. He also denied having written the letter, to be found amongst the evidence, bearing his signature.

Vladislav Kovatscheff, ex-Secretary of the Committee, knew nothing about the murder of Professor Mihaileano beyond what he had read in the newspapers. He did not know the President of the Bucharest branch of the Macedonian Committee nor the other persons accused in Bucharest. The Committee had never decided that any one should be murdered. He had never used a cypher nor had he sent anything to the Bucharest prisoners.

D. Troleff knew nothing about the murder of Professor Mihaileano, and was unacquainted with the murderers. The letter contained in the evidence for the prosecution bore his signature, but he could not remember ever having written such a letter.

Eighteen witnesses were examined, of whom five had known the murdered man, Cyril Fitowsky, and the same number were personally acquainted with the accused.

Tuika Dimitroff, the first witness, deposed that Polyxena, Fitowsky's wife, had told her that her husband was a Turkish spy and that when they lived in Constantinople he had received 10*l.* a-month from the Turkish Government.

Todor Dragieff, the second witness, was formerly clerk in the Rustchuk Municipality and had to give certificates for passports to other countries. He deposed that he did not know Boico Ilieff, N. Mitoff, or Stoitscheff, but was acquainted with the accused, Stoyanoff, who often visited him and the other officials. He could not remember if Stoyanoff came to him with the three above-mentioned men, and inquired about an answer from Sophia. He stated further that, according to the records of the Rustchuk Municipality, passports had been given to Ilieff, Mitoff, and Stoitscheff. In the preliminary inquiry witness stated that Stoyanoff had inquired about the answer to a telegram relating to Ilieff, Mitoff, and Stoitscheff, but it had afterwards occurred to him that it might be a question of another telegram, so that he could not maintain his assertions made in the preliminary inquiry. Every day telegrams came in from all parts of the country, so that he could not know with certainty which telegram was in question.

Ivana Fitowsky, the mother of the murdered man, stated that in 1899 her son was in the 2nd Infantry Regiment, in the company of Captain Popoff, who took a great liking for her son. Shortly afterwards he appeared nervous and uneasy, and on being questioned by her he stated that he was to be sent to Sophia, but feared to go there on account of a certain Boris Sarafoff. Later on her son was sent by Captain Popoff to Roumania to buy arms, and the latter sent him about 700 fr. Owing to her son's long absence in Roumania Captain Popoff began to get uneasy, and proposed to her husband that he should go to Roumania to fetch their son back, but her husband refused. Finally, Captain Popoff went himself to Roumania to find Cyril Fitowsky and met him in Giurgevo; but Fitowsky refused to return to Bulgaria. Soon afterwards he was murdered. Who but Captain Popoff, she said, could have murdered him?—the money that had been given to him for the purchase of arms being the cause.

Gantseho Fitowsky, the father of the deceased, said that he did not know Sarafoff, but he was sure that the murderers of his son were Captain Popoff, his brother Petraki, and Georgi Todoroff. Captain Popoff had been commissioned by the Central Macedonian Committee to buy arms in Roumania, and he intrusted this task to his son, whom he sent into Roumania. Before that time his son had served in the army in Captain Popoff's company, with whom he was great friends. He had noticed that his son was thin and careworn, and in reply to his questions the latter had said that he was to go to Sophia, to become an officer of the Reserve there, but that he did not wish to go, as he was afraid of Boris Sarafoff. He spoke to Popoff on the subject, who said that Sarafoff hated his son, but that as long as he, Popoff, was alive, there was nothing to fear. Fitowsky added that soon afterwards his son asked him for money, which he refused to give, but learnt that his son had been given funds by Popoff, and had gone to Nicopol, whence his son had written to him begging him to come, as he had a secret to reveal to him. He did not go, however. Moreover, he questioned Popoff as to what had become of his son, and was told that he had been sent to Roumania in order to buy arms there, that he had been given money—700 fr.—by Captain Rotogeroff, Lieutenant Stoyanoff, and himself, and

that he would get 14,000 fr. more to buy 2,000 rifles. The murdered man's father further deposed that as time went on and his son did not return Popoff began to get uneasy, begged him to go to Roumania to fetch him back, but he refused to do so. Some days later his son wrote to Popoff, saying he would reveal the whole secret if money was not sent to him. Popoff thereupon came to him and insisted strongly that he should send money to his son, but witness did not do so. Witness here related how his brother had brought Captain Popoff to Giurgevo, but the latter had returned alone, the deceased having refused to come back with him. From that time till the 1st February, 1900, he had had no further news of his son, till he was told that he had been murdered in Bucharest, whither he went and was shown the body of his son and also his son's murderers. On returning to Rustchuk he asked Captain Popoff what had happened to his son, and the latter had answered that the fault lay not with him but with Boris Sarafoff, who had sent three persons to Bucharest to kill his son. He stated that he did not know Boris Sarafoff, but that before the crime a young man had met him and asked him if he knew him, and as witness did not answer, he said, "I am Boris Sarafoff." (Sarafoff here stated that in returning from Giurgevo in December 1899 he travelled with an old man whom he now recognized to be the witness, but that he had no idea then that he was the father of the murdered man.) Gantscho Fitowsky, however, could not remember having seen Sarafoff, and ended his evidence by demanding the punishment of the murderers of his son, and also of those who had prompted the crime.

Petraki Fitowsky, younger brother of the last witness, a poor fisherman of Rustchuk, deposed that on one occasion his brother engaged him to convey in his boat to Giurgevo a man who was a stranger to him, for which he gave him 10 fr. This stranger took him with him to Bucharest, where they looked for Cyril Fitowsky. After three days they returned to Giurgevo, and from there to Rustchuk, but Cyril Fitowsky remained in Giurgevo. Witness further stated that he asked Cyril Fitowsky why he did not return to Rustchuk, and that the latter answered in tears, "I cannot; my father has dug a grave for me." Cyril Fitowsky gave witness 2 fr., and also wished to give him his uniform, but he did not accept it. Witness did not know the stranger whom he had conveyed in his boat to Giurgevo, but stated that he was a tall, thin man with a black beard. Finally, witness begged that his brother might be forbidden to bear the name of Fitowsky, as he, like his murdered son, Cyril Fitowsky, was a spy on the side of the Turks.

Dimitri Nicoloff and *Dona Nicoloff* confirmed the evidence of the first witness, Tiuka Dimitroff.

Gjosche Schuscheff was porter at the Hotel Battenberg, in which his late brother Peter kept a café. He stated he knew nothing about the telegram alleged to have been sent by the accused Stoyanoff to Schuscheff for Boris Sarafoff, but he added that possibly his brother had received the telegram.

Ivan Vitcoff was Registrar in the municipality of this town. He stated that the inclosed copy of the telegram sent from the Sophia to the Rustchuk Municipality, relating to the passports for Ilieff, Mitoff, and Stoitscheff was made by him, but that he did not know what was the reason for the telegram being sent.

Chr. G. Popoff, formerly Mayor of the town of Sophia, stated emphatically that neither Boris Sarafoff nor any other of the accused had ever applied to him for passports to be given to Ilieff, Mitoff, and Stoitscheff. He stated that he had sent the telegram to the Rustchuk Municipality, probably in consequence of some question from them. Witness only made Sarafoff's acquaintance after the sending of the telegram, when the latter asked for employment for several Macedonians.

Vladimir Kosakoff deposed that he lived for several years in Bucharest, occupying himself with journalism till his expulsion from that town last year. He had read in the Bucharest papers that a certain Fitowsky had been murdered, and that the crime was put down to the Central Macedonian Committee in Sophia. Witness stated that the Roumanian press had censured very strongly Bulgaria and the Macedonian movement. One day he was asked for his views about the murder by a paper, but wishing to have correct information on the subject he had put himself in correspondence with Sarafoff, who was, however, a stranger to him. At the request of an acquaintance of his, a lawyer named Botujanu, who had been intrusted with the defence of the murderer, Boico Ilieff, he went to the prison to act as interpreter between the lawyer and his client. On being questioned by witness as to why he had murdered Cyril Fitowsky, Ilieff had replied that he had placed difficulties in the way of the Macedonian Committee and had acted as spy on its members. Boico Ilieff, to another question from witness, stated that he did not regret having committed the murder. A few days later Professor Mihaileano had been

murdered, and witness stated that he was arrested and imprisoned for six weeks. In reply to one of the jury, witness said that neither in the prison nor before the examining Magistrate had he been ill-treated, but had been allowed to give his evidence quite openly.

Nicola Spiroff, Chr. P. Nicoloff, Vassil Joveff deposed that they had been present at the meeting held at the Hotel Unica, where, on the proposal of Sarafoff, it had been decided to form a branch of the Macedonian Committee in Bucharest.

Captain Popoff deposed that he had known Cyril Fitowsky, as the latter had served in his company. He only knew later that Fitowsky was a deserter. He knew Fitowsky's parents because they had visited their son in camp. Witness deposed that he had not been on intimate terms with either Cyril Fitowsky or his parents, and described the assertions of the deceased man's parents, to the effect that he (witness) had tried to force the father to fetch his son back from Roumania as malicious lies. Questioned, witness stated that he had been twice in Roumania, but had never met Cyril Fitowsky there or knew the murdered man's wife. Witness was confronted with Fitowsky's parents, but both sides adhered to their assertions.

Captain Protogeroff, the last witness, stated that all he knew about the murders of Fitowsky and Mihaileano was what he had read in the newspapers. Witness knew Stoyanoff, but could not remember if the latter had ever talked to him about the Macedonian Committee. Witness also knew Cyril Fitowsky when the latter had served in the army. In reply to a question put by one of the counsel for the defence, witness stated that, at the request of the Bulgarian Diplomatic Agent in Bucharest, a military inquiry had been set on foot against Fitowsky on the charge of being a spy.

The evidence of the witnesses being now concluded, the evidence of the experts was taken, all of whom agreed that the signatures to the documents resembled the handwritings of the accused, but, owing to only photographic reproductions being submitted to them, they could not state with conviction that these were their signatures.

The Crown Prosecutor, M. Verbanoff, now proceeded to review the case, stating that, although the charge appeared to have some political colouring, it was in reality nothing but an ordinary criminal trial, in which Judges and jury alike had to sift and weigh the evidence adduced by the prosecution and the witnesses. Counsel for the prosecution contended that Sarafoff had used the patriotic tendencies of certain persons for a criminal purpose, and that he had sent these same men to Bucharest to commit a murder there; that Fitowsky's death had been decided on in Sophia, and as it was impossible to murder the victim on Bulgarian soil, the crime was committed in a foreign country—that is to say, in Roumania. Counsel further contended that the evidence had not proved that Fitowsky was a spy in the Turkish service. The deceased had served in the army—in Captain Popoff's company—had been sent by him to buy arms in Roumania, but had used the money given to him for this purpose for his own needs, and, as he refused to return, his death had been decided on. The Court had to decide whether Boris Sarafoff and Sofroni Stoyanoff were implicated in this crime, which the Crown laid to their charge.

It should be noted that, while laying before the jury the facts elicited during the trial, the Crown Prosecutor used every device to eliminate their damnatory character, and in general tendency his speech was a defence rather than an indictment.

M. Ghennadief, in his speech for the defence, insisted on the political nature of the trial, and, after refuting the evidence brought against the prisoners and declaring that the use of lethal weapons in the sacred cause was worthy of all praise, demanded that his clients should be enabled to continue their task of working for the liberty of Macedonia.

MM. Melinoff and Resheff spoke in the same strain, the latter maintaining that, if Macedonia had become a nursery of assassins, it was owing to the cruel despotism of the Turk.

Sophia, August 8 (21), 1901.

No. 89.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 26.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 21, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to report that the annual Congress of the Macedonian Societies was opened on the 11th and closed on the 18th instant, the sittings being held, as usual, in the strictest secrecy.

It is stated that the discussions were of a stormy nature, and that charges of malversation were brought against Boris Sarafoff, ex-President of the Committee, who, however, on being set at liberty after his trial in connection with the Bucharest murders, as reported in my despatch of to-day's date, took the first opportunity of attending the Congress, where he is said to have given satisfactory explanations regarding the expenditure of certain sums immediately before his arrest in April last.

In spite of the fact that Sarafoff had declined to put himself forward as a candidate for the presidentship, there seems to have been a strong movement in his favour among delegates; but it is now announced that a Central Committee has been elected consisting of the following persons, from among whom the President will be chosen :—

Stefan Mikhaïlovsky, the retiring President; Major-General Tsoncheff (retired), who gave up active service more than six months ago with the supposed object of offering himself for election as President; Lieutenant-Colonel Yanko Nikoloff (retired); Lieutenant Bozukoff (retired), who took a prominent part in the last Macedonian insurrection, and has since acquired considerable popularity in consequence of his having served for some months with the Transvaal Boers; Captain Stoïcheff, Assistant Military Procureur at Vratsa; and a schoolmaster at Rustchuk named Beloff.

Up to the moment of writing I have been unable to obtain any trustworthy details with respect to the policy likely to be adopted by the new Committee, but I shall not fail to report further to your Lordship by the earliest opportunity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

No. 90.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 26.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August* 19, 1901.

SINCE reporting to your Lordship, in my despatch of the 30th July, the representations to the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs which I was led to make on account of the disturbed condition of the belt of country lying between Servia and Montenegro, I have received from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, Mr. Shipley, several despatches on the origin and progress of the disturbances. I have the honour to inclose a copy of the last of these Reports, which sums up the views entertained of the events in question by the Russian Consul and by the Turkish authorities respectively.

The recent conflicts, which, in the opinion of the Vali of Uskub, have been much exaggerated, are merely an episode in the perennial state of warfare existing between the Albanians of these regions and the Servian population. The former cannot tolerate that the latter should be armed, and it is not disputed that large quantities of rifles have made their way of late across the adjoining frontiers, whether, as the Russian Consul contends, by way of legitimate trade, or, as the Turks say, by the agency of professional agitators, whose proceedings are tolerated, if not actually approved, by the Servian Government.

Your Lordship will remember that in January last an active and not unsuccessful search for arms was made in the Uskub district, leading to the recent trial and conviction of a number of Bulgars at Uskub. The proceedings of the agents of the Macedonian Committee in the Valley of the Vardar led to the Salonica trials concluded in the month of March. The more recent disturbances in the country between Uskub and Novi-Bazar have concerned the Servians alone, all other Rayas remaining unmolested. They are traced to a dynamite outrage in the village of Sienitza, near Mitrovitza, of which a Mussulman notable was the victim, resulting in conflict between a small band of armed Servians with Turkish soldiers at Kolashin. Both incidents occurred in the early part of July. The Albanian population caught the alarm and the flame was actively fanned, it is said, by a Mollah of Prishtina and Djemal Bey, the influential Mutessarif of that district. A noted Albanian bandit, called Issa Bolyetinatz, was let loose on the Servian villages. Troops were sent to Novi-Bazar, and Hamdi Pasha, Inspector of Frontier Forces, displayed great activity in the Albanian interest.

M. Mashkoff, Russian Consul at Uskub, was dispatched by his Embassy on the 17th July to the seat of the disturbance. He proceeded to Mitrovitza and returned to Uskub early this month. His demands, which, as your Lordship is aware from my despatch of the 30th July, were supported by the Russian Ambassador, were directed towards obtaining the release of the prisoners, the return of the fugitive Servians, and

permission for them to bear arms, as do their Albanian oppressors. The Servian exodus has, however, been considerable, and it does not appear how far M. Mashkoff has succeeded in arresting it. It is, however, worth noting that Russia, rather than Austria, has come forward in this instance as the protector of Servian interests.

The Kolashin district, a principal centre of the disturbance, is described by Sir A. Biliotti as being of considerable strategic importance. It commands a direct road from Servia to Montenegro and forms the meeting point of the three sanjaks of Novi-Bazar, Prizrend, and Ipek. It lies in the Valley of the Ibar, a confluent of the Morava.

According to Mr. Shipley, it would not be politic to allow the arming of the Servian inhabitants of the disturbed region. The Albanians will certainly resist it, and they will as certainly be supported by this Government, which places the same reliance on the Albanians in Europe as it does on the Kurds in Asia.

Meanwhile the Russian Consul states that quiet has been restored for the time being.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 90.

Acting Vice-Consul Shipley to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

(Extract.) *Uskub, August* 11, 1901.

M. MASHKOFF, the Russian Consul, told me, on his return from Mitrovitza last week, that quiet had been re-established in that district, but that he feared renewed action on the part of the Albanians in the Novi-Bazar regions.

The Turkish and the Russian versions of the late trouble are in the main singularly alike. The only point on which they really disagree is the origin of the Albanian movement.

M. Mashkoff maintains that the Mutessarif of Prishtina was at the bottom of it. He says that that official, desirous of distinguishing himself, and envious of the other local Governors who had had Bulgarian plots and bands to unearth and had reaped rich benefits from them, took hold of some frivolous pretext, and by the imprisonment of Servian priests and masters stirred up the Albanians, who, as usual on such occasions, finally superseded the local authorities in the direction of affairs, and threatened to become completely unmanageable. It was this which caused his (M. Mashkoff's) being sent by the Russian Embassy to make an inquiry and protest strongly against the Albanians being allowed to take the lead and against the disarming of the Christians.

As an instance of the result of leaving the latter without weapons other than revolvers and shot-guns, he mentioned the case of a village a few miles from Prishtina, where some forty Martini-Henry rifles had been confiscated, which was that same evening overrun by Albanians, who carried off the whole stock of cattle—a thing which they had never till then dared to do.

Hamdi Pasha, on the other hand, says there was very good reason for the action of the authorities, inasmuch as "arms in great quantities and dynamite" were being imported from Servia, mostly from Nish, where the Turks left them during the war. As to the man Sava, whom the Servians imprisoned "for exporting arms to Turkey," it was well known that he was only then stopped when it was discovered that he was a spy in the Turkish service, who had given full information as to the numbers of the arms sent across the frontier "by order of the Government." M. Mashkoff allows that a considerable quantity* of arms have been imported, but merely in the way of trade, and that where the Servians bought ten, the Albanians bought a hundred, which he considers proved by the fact that, with all their diligence, the Government and the Albanians together have only discovered 210 rifles this last time, 300 since the very beginning of the affair, among the Christians, although Issa Bolyetinatz has grown rich in the trade.

M. Mashkoff informs me that there are about twenty Servian priests and schoolmasters still in prison, of whom nine at Novi-Bazar and five at Prishtina.

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* Estimated at 20,000

No. 91.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 26.)

My Lord, *Athens, August 19, 1901.*

I LEARN, from what I believe to be a good source, that an Albanian Revolutionary Committee has been in existence at Corfu for some time past, and is endeavouring to foment agitation and to distribute arms amongst the Albanian tribes. A consignment of rifles of a recent type, which had been dispatched by the Committee, was seized by the Turkish authorities at Porto Palermo last spring, and a further consignment has since been introduced into the country by way of Chimara. I am informed that the Committee has lately come to terms with the Epirote Revolutionary Society, and that these two bodies, if not actually fused into one, are now working together with the object of putting an end to Turkish rule in Albania. The movement is stated to be entirely unconnected with any real or pretended Italian intrigues, but to be supported by certain "Young Turks," and amongst others by Mahmoud, the brother-in-law of the Sultan, who is now at Corfu.

I should add that I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the above information, though I consider that the source from which I have obtained it is sufficiently good to warrant my reporting it to your Lordship.

Whilst on this subject I may mention that, as far as I can ascertain, the Greek Government is most anxious to maintain a correct attitude towards Turkey in regard to the "Young Turkish" agitation, and to avoid any appearance of connivance at the proceedings of any members of that party who may have taken refuge in Greek territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

No. 92.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 2.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August 24, 1901.*

IN continuation of my despatch of the 21st instant, regarding the proceedings of the recent Macedonian Congress at Sophia, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that Professor Mikhaïlovsky has been re-elected President of the Committee, his former rival, General Tsoncheff, having been induced to content himself with the post of Vice-President.

Your Lordship will have observed that, with the exception of two schoolmasters, MM. Mikhaïlovsky and Beloff, the new Central Committee is composed entirely of reserve officers (Captain Stoicheff resigned his commission immediately on being elected), and this fact, if not sufficient to substantiate the rumour that a quasi-military organization of the Macedonian movement is contemplated, at least gives one reason to suppose that, whatever may be the future policy of the Committee, its operations will be conducted with a stricter discipline than has hitherto been possible.

It is said that Sarafoff is planning a European tour, but as he is under sentence by a Roumanian Tribunal for murder, it is more probable that he will eventually decide not to leave Bulgaria. For the present he remains at Sophia, and is an object of public attention in the cafés and other places of entertainment, where he appears in company of a band of Macedonians ostentatiously armed with revolvers and daggers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

No. 93.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 2.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, August 24, 1901.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch to your Lordship of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that, on my asking M. Daneff, the Bulgarian

Minister for Foreign Affairs, his opinion regarding the composition of the newly-elected Macedonian Central Committee, his Excellency expressed his satisfaction at the victory which the Moderate party had won in the Congress in consequence of the disclosures made concerning the administration of the funds of the Society, and stated his conviction that the period of terrorism and violence was now at an end. The only member of the Committee with whom he was personally acquainted was Professor Mikhaïlovsky, whom he characterized in the terms quoted by Mr. Elliot in his despatch to your Lordship of the 8th May last; General Tsoncheff was, so far as he was aware, a highly-efficient officer, and a man of moderate and enlightened views, but he (M. Daneff) had purposely abstained from entering into personal relations with "ces gens," as he did not wish to influence them in any way.

I told M. Daneff that I was glad to hear that the criminal excesses of the past were not likely to be renewed in the future. At the same time I thought it my duty to mention that the recent dynamite outrages in various provincial towns were suspected to be the work of Macedonian agents, and that the activity of the Bulgarian bands in Macedonia itself showed little sign of diminishing; in fact, proofs of the complicity of the Sophia Committee in the crimes perpetrated by these bands were daily accumulating, and I had in my possession the translation of a document found on the person of a Bulgarian revolutionary in which the fact was expressly stated. (I here alluded to the document inclosed in Sir Nicholas O'Conor's despatch to your Lordship of the 15th July.)

His Excellency, after referring to the evidence produced at the recent Bulgarian trials at Salonica, replied that that was an old story; it was undeniable that three members of the late Committee, including Sarafoff, had been in direct relations with the "Comités Intérieurs," but he could assure me that such was not the case with any member of the new Committee. He had not perused the Report drawn up by the Examining Magistrate on the dynamite outrages at Varna, but his private impression was that the persons accused belonged rather to the category of Socialists or Anarchists.

No. 94.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 16.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 9, 1901.

IN my despatch of the 19th ultimo on the disturbed condition of the north-west frontier of Macedonia, I had the honour to report to your Lordship that the Russian Embassy was intervening to prevent the Servian population of Old Servia from being driven over the border by the persistent and premeditated persecution of the Albanian clans.

Further representations were reported to have been made by M. Zinovieff on the 3rd instant, and I am now informed that, as a result of this action, an Iradé has been issued dismissing the Mutessarif of Prishtina, Djemal Bey, ordering the arrest and trial of a number of police agents and Albanian Beys, and granting permission to the Servian refugees to return. Similar demands had been in vain preferred by the Servian Minister, so that the success of the Russian Ambassador will, no doubt, be highly appreciated at Belgrade. Whether, however, they will be carried out in so far as the Albanian Beys are concerned may be doubted.

An abstract of the principal incidents which have occurred in the province during the past fortnight is inclosed herewith, and similar reports embodying information received from His Majesty's Consular officers and other sources will be sent to you Lordship at frequent intervals.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Report by Mr. Young on the Condition of Macedonia.

Old Servia and the Albanian Border.—Old Servia is still an area of disturbance owing to the lawlessness, vendettas, and racial jealousies of the Albanians.

Persecution of the Servian Element.—The continuance of the oppression of the Servian population is shown by Mr. Shipley's report of complaints from Bernek, where 600 Albanians and fifty soldiers were quartered on a village of sixty households, reducing it to destitution. Noury Pasha, Military Commander of the vilayet, is held responsible for this form of oppression. Political brigandage is another weapon in the racial conflict. Mr. Shipley has drawn up a list, obtained, it is true, from the Servian and Bulgarian representatives, and therefore an *ex parte* statement, of some thirty acts of brigandage committed on Christian villagers between the 14th June and the 1st August, which includes six persons killed, three wounded, and ten held to ransom, besides heavy losses by cattle-lifting, arson, and robbery under arms. The sums reported to have been extorted in ransoms, fines for illegally ransoming, blackmail, bribes, and taxes are almost incredible. Mr. Shipley gives the following budget of the village of Nikoforovo for last year :—

	£
Bribes to guards	150
Blackmail to the brigand Hassan, 15*l.* a-month	180
Brigands, for three ransoms	55
„ for presents	10
Government taxes	115
Total	510

There would appear to be twelve professional brigands in active practice on the Christian population in this district; one of them is supposed to be in Bulgarian pay because he devotes himself exclusively to Servian villages.

The action of the Administration in this matter seems unsatisfactory. Mehmet Pasha, the Commandant of Gendarmerie, who has been recalled at the instance of certain Embassies, is a man of independent views and with the courage of his opinions. In a conversation with Mr. Shipley before leaving, he admitted and deplored the condition of the country.

The character of the subordinate officials appears in a recent affair at Prisrend, where the Chief of Police, who has spent some years of his life in prison, lodged a charge of embezzlement against the Chief of Gendarmerie, an ex-brigand. Neither being satisfied with the award of the Mutessarif, both parties raised their followers and prepared to fight it out. The markets were closed and the town in a state of siege until the affair was settled by Shemsi Pasha. The Mutessarif has applied for a transfer and left for Uskub.

It remains to be seen whether the Iradé recently obtained by the Russian Ambassador, the provisions of which are reported in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 9th instant, will have an effect in pacifying this district. M. Grouitch, the Servian Minister here, takes a more cheerful view of the situation than that given above; he estimates the number of emigrants who have recently crossed the frontier at 1,000; the press gives a much larger figure: the Macedonian Committee says 40,000 Bulgarians alone; Mr. Shipley, quoting the Servian Agent, says that men are emigrating in such numbers that only old men and women are left in the villages.

Montenegrin Frontier.—Another line of racial friction is the Albano-Montenegrin border. Here, however, the rôle of the Administration appears to be that of mediator. Trouble threatening at Mokra is reported to have been avoided by the Palace purchasing the harvests in dispute for 500*l.*

Bulgarian Frontier.—This frontier is reported in the press to have been the scene of a frontier incident of the usual type. Official reports are wanting, but it would appear that a band of Bulgarians raided Turkish territory and a fight ensued, in which the Turks lost three killed and eight wounded. Reinforcements arrived, and the raiders were presumably pursued over the border, for on the 18th August the Bulgarian Agent protested against the violation of the frontier and the occupation of a place called Klisobair, the ownership of which the Turks seem inclined to dispute. The troops were eventually withdrawn, and at the same time the Vali of Adrianople and the local Commander were decorated. The continuance of these collisions under the new management of the Macedonian Committee is disappointing.

Bulgarian Political Prisoners.—Forty of the 138 Bulgarians confined in Salonica for political offences have been sent to St. Jean d'Acre. In view of the insanitary state and overcrowding of the Salonica gaols this is, perhaps, matter for congratulation, and to be attributed to the attention directed to their condition by the Consuls.

Mutinies.—Incipient mutinies for arrears of pay are reported by Sir A. Biliotti,

in the garrisons of Prisrend and Salonica. The latter threatened at one time to be serious. Six battalions of time-expired soldiers were affected and intended kidnapping the Vali and Treasurer as hostages for the satisfaction of their claims. The Vali was, consequently, confined to his house until permission could be got from the Palace to make use of the monies reserved for the Privy Purse. This was obtained and the troops paid and shipped home, but 1,600 time-expired men remain to be paid.

Rival Propaganda.—The conflict of the Bulgarian and Greek propaganda in ecclesiastical affairs has found expression in the seizure by the Bulgarians of the island monastery of St. Anastasia in the neighbourhood of Bourgas. The monastery, having many precedents to lead it to anticipate some such action, had recently sold all its property except the buildings, so that the loss is not serious. The Patriarchate have protested, but so far unavailingly.

The Greek Church and propaganda in Macedonia have suffered a severer loss than this in the death of M. Paul Stefanovitch, a wealthy banker of Constantinople and Manchester, who, Chiote by origin and under the protection of Italian nationality, used his considerable influence and large fortune on behalf of his co-religionists with judgment and prudence. He is credited with having inspired for many years the policy of the Patriarchate, and in the recent crisis, when the Synod and Council attacked Constantine V for co-operating with the Palace and the Athenian Synod in counteracting Bulgarian proselytizing activity in Macedonia, he did his best to stave off the Patriarch's deposition. The *odium theologicum* of the Phanariote Synod was, however, stronger than its Hellenism; and Constantine, abandoned by the Palace, was deposed, and the pro-Slav Joachim III elected. The double loss of Patriarch and patron is a severe blow to Hellenic interests in Macedonia.

Brigandage.—There have been several cases of pure, *i.e.*, non-political, brigandage. The Monastir mail was ambushed on the 29th ultimo, but the brigands attacking by mistake the carriage of two merchants, the mail eluded them. One of the merchants was killed, together with the four zaptiehs of their escort, and the other robbed of a large sum.

Last week four ladies were kidnapped in the Province of Salonica; two have since been released, but two, a Mrs. Tsilka and a Miss Stone, an American missionary, have been carried off to the mountains. The American Legation is taking steps for their release.

(Signed) GEORGE YOUNG.

Therapia, September 11, 1901.

No. 95.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 30.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, September* 24, 1901.

IN my despatch of the 29th July last I forwarded copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, in which he reported that he had, in conversation with the Vali, suggested that the system of local guards known as "paganas," which had been established in certain districts, should be extended to the whole vilayet.

I have since inquired of Sir A. Biliotti as to the reasons which led him to make this suggestion, and have received in reply the despatch of which I inclose a copy herewith. Sir A. Biliotti furnishes further details regarding these local guards and the beneficial results which have attended their institution in parts of the province, and he gives what would seem to be cogent reasons for believing them to be better adapted to the conditions prevailing in the district, and likely to prove more efficacious for the suppression of brigandage than the gendarmes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, September* 9, 1901.

CASSANDRA and Chalcid, the south-western districts of the Vilayet of Salonica, whose inhabitants are Greek with a sprinkling of only 10 per cent. of Moslems, have been at all times more or less visited by bands of brigands, mostly coming from Greece.

The kidnapping of Mr. Chevalier, who had just been appointed our Vice-Consul at Cassandra, about two and a-half years ago, and for whose ransom 15,000 liras had to be paid by the Porte, is still talked of by the public, although acts of brigandage on a smaller scale have continued yearly.

In the early part of 1899, at Cassandra, a band of brigands attacked a farm belonging to one of the Greek monasteries of Mount Athos, and was repulsed with the loss of one man. Six months later they renewed the attack, and after wounding two monks, they looted the farm.

Towards the end of the same year other brigands forced an entrance at a locality called Sikia (Cassandra) in the farm of another monastery of Mount Athos, and after murdering the superintendent, made off with spoils.

In February 1900 a fresh band of brigands took possession of a farm at Cassandra, also belonging to one of the Mount Athos monasteries, and made off with everything they found, money and effects, after beating and otherwise ill-treating the monks. In revenge for the latter having informed the Government and applied for protection, the same brigands returned to this monastery in the month of August following, and tortured the monks to the extent that one of them died from the burns inflicted on him with petroleum. It is useless to add that they again looted the farm.

Finally, in the month of June of the present year, a band under the leadership of a certain Capitan Giorgi Dimopoulo, surrounded the farm of Aghia Mama, at Chalcid, belonging to a rich Greek of Salonica, Mihalaki Bey, and, as reported in my despatch of the 7th July, burnt down the buildings, and made off with the superintendent of the farm, whom they murdered shortly after.

Ever since Mr. Chevalier's kidnapping troops have been stationed in five different localities in these two districts, but, as seen from the foregoing statement, their presence was not sufficient to protect the population against the brigands. At each fresh act of brigandage the population was claiming the creation of paganas as the only effective means of securing their life and property.

Although the district of Caterini, on the Greek frontier, south-west of Salonica, was similarly infested by brigands, and is quite free of them since paganas were created in that district a few years ago, the Porte refuses the creation of similar bodies elsewhere from fear of the population being provided with arms.

The paganas consist of two or three natives from each village; Christians and Moslems, picked up by the inhabitants themselves for the purpose of watching to the security of the district. Having a perfect knowledge of the localities and of each man of their village, they detect at once a foreigner, and know where to look for him if he absconds. These are details with which soldiers and gendarmes cannot be acquainted, or, in any case, not to the same degree. Furthermore, the paganas have to secure the safety of their own wives and children, and of their own property, which they will of course do with a watchfulness and a care which cannot be expected from mercenaries

The paganas of Caterina, which consist of from one to more men, according to the population of each village, are under the command of a Christian, who, though a former chief of brigands, does very well. Arms and ammunition have been provided for them by the Turkish authorities, and, in case of need, troops assist them.

In consequence of the reluctance of the Porte to give arms to other Christians, the Vali recruited 130 Albanians and Gheghs to pursue the brigands at Chalcid and Cassandra.

A deputation of the Mount Athos monks called on me, accompanied by two superintendents of farms, and stated to me as follows:—

The soldiers stationed in the two districts of Chalcid and Cassandra are well-behaved, and give not the least motive of complaint to the Christian population. Three or four of them were killed or wounded in chasing the brigands. The 130 gendarmes did not display the same activity, probably because with the restoration of tranquillity their

services would be dispensed with. They were accused by the Greek deputation of abusing Christians, beating, imprisoning at their will, and committing all sorts of exactions; in a word, of being a real scourge for these two districts. The deputation explained to me that these 130 gendarmes, being paid at the rate of 2 liras, the monthly outlay amounted to 260 liras, and they maintained that four paganas of ten men each or forty men in all, to be paid only 1½ liras, would secure perfect safety to the natives, besides effecting an economy of 200 liras a month—a very important sum in the present financial difficulties of this Government.

The Christians beg that these four paganas should be stationed at Pazaria, Mademohori, Ilaska, Calamaria, and Cassandra. If their repeated request is granted, the population of the two districts in question will have no reason to complain, as they do now bitterly, of the measures hitherto taken by the local authorities, not preventing them from being murdered and robbed by brigands, and of being ill-treated and spoliated by the gendarmes sent to protect them. All the Consuls share the opinion of the Christian population regarding the creation of paganas. As the only impediment appears to be the objection of the Porte to give arms to a few Christians, and as the latter have not the slightest complaint against the regular troops, I suggested to the Vali that, as a measure of precaution, to satisfy the apprehension of the Government, he might, while handing forty rifles and adequate ammunition to the natives, station an equal, or even a superior, number of troops in the localities where paganas may be created.

After having studied the question, his Excellency appears to be in favour of this measure; but before taking a final decision, he is awaiting the receipt of a report which he directed the Kaïmakam of the districts in question to make on the subject.

Meanwhile the inmates of farms are under the necessity, if they do not wish to endanger their lives, to be on the best terms with the brigands, by sheltering them and attending to all their wants.

So well does the Vali admit this fact that two monks who were lately sued for having given shelter and food to Capitan Giorgi and his men were acquitted on my explaining matters to his Excellency.

In one of the cazas of the neighbouring Mutessariflik of Serres brigandage is as rife as in Chalcid and Cassandra, but the brigands are Bulgarians and the victims Vlach shepherds. About 200 of these are stationed on the mountain beyond Melnik, and are at the mercy of the brigands, who exact from them food and money, when they happen to possess any.

I reported in my despatch of the 7th July the murder of several Vlach shepherds, and the burning down of their farm in revenge for information given to the authorities, or for having served as guides to the troops sent against them. Not later than the 26th ultimo they murdered a Vlach shepherd at only two hours' distance from Serres, and carried off the head shepherd of the monastery of St. John Chrysostom, for the purpose of exacting a ransom for his release.

Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Theodorides, who is not acquainted with the details concerning Chalcid and Cassandra, has lately reported to me that so long as the Vlach shepherds are not armed on the same principle as the paganas, in order to defend themselves and refuse victuals, brigandage cannot be extirpated from Melnik and the neighbouring country. But before urging on the Vali the necessity of taking such a step in Melnik, it is prudent to wait and see the result attained by the paganas which may be established at Chalcid and Cassandra.

There is the same unanimity among the population and the Consuls in recommending that no paganas should be created westward of Melnik, where the bulk of the population is Bulgarian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI

No. 96.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 30.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, September* 25, 1901.

REFERRING to my despatch of the 9th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Report prepared by Mr. Young on events in Macedonia during the past fortnight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 96.

Report on Events in Macedonia.

Northern Frontier.

It is satisfactory to record that the crops in Western Macedonia are unusually good this year, the tithe receipts alone showing a surplus over last year of 40,000*l.*

The collision between Turkish and Bulgarian troops at Sari Tash, on the frontier, reported a fortnight ago as a closed incident, has apparently not been settled to the satisfaction of the Bulgarian Government. M. Daneff, in a conversation with Mr. McGregor, seemed to think that Turkish troops were still on Bulgarian territory, and referred to the possibility of a mixed delimitation Commission. The Ottoman Commissioner, however, denied all knowledge of such a proposal. The publication in Constantinople of a communiqué to the effect that the forts on the Bulgarian border are to be repaired, may indicate friction on this frontier.

Salonica.

The resignation of Kemal Bey, Treasurer of the Vilayet of Salonica, owing to the indignities to which he was exposed through the non-payment of time-expired troops, is to be regretted. On the occasion of his recall recently, unofficial representations were made in his favour by the Embassy Dragomanate, and Sir A. Biliotti writes of him as "a very straightforward functionary, gifted with great ability and energy." As the annual budget of the vilayet has none the less shown a deficit of 240,000*l.*, equal to more than a-third of the total receipts, the financial outlook is not promising.

Mail robberies on the Austrian and French postal service to Salonica have caused these Powers to arrange a special messenger service, in which Great Britain will join.

Brigandage.

Further details of the capture of Miss Stone, the American schoolmistress, have been received from Salonica and Sophia, from which it appears that the case is one of political brigandage. The band consists of Bulgarians, disguised as Turks and speaking broken Turkish, and is under the leadership of one Doncho, a notorious local bandit. This man was recently worsted in an engagement with the Turks and wounded, but got away to Bulgaria. On his recovery he returned with a band, and ambushed Miss Stone while in charge of her girls, not far from Bansko. The party were driven through a stream and some distance over the hills. They were then robbed of their valuables, and Miss Stone and Mrs. Tsilka, a native missionary, were hurried off on horseback with the main body. The girls, after being kept all night on the mountain, where they suffered considerably from cold and hunger, were left at sunrise to find their way back as best they could.

The locality is ill-famed, and, if it be true that an escort was refused, the authorities will have some excuse for doing nothing, and excusing themselves with the favourite Turkish saw, that "a fool can throw a stone into a well which thirty wise men can't get out." Great caution is, however, necessary in dealing with a desperado like Doncho. On the occasion of his last collision with the troops he murdered his captives on being attacked, and the party just released report that a Turk was beaten, they say, to death, before their eyes. No communication has yet been received from him, and if he is acting under orders from the Macedonian Secret Committee, as seems probable, he is likely to prolong the situation as much as possible. Boris Sarafoff, ex-President of the Macedonian Committee, is, according to Mr. McGregor, reported to have threatened to make life impossible for foreigners in Macedonia, and is suspected of planning this coup to discredit the Turkish Administration.

Macedonia and Epirus.

Macedonia may shortly be expected to settle down for the winter, and the tone of reports is less pessimistic. Its general condition is probably still several degrees better than that of Epirus; one indication of the difference may be observed in the fact that, whereas brigandage in Macedonia is political, or purely predatory, in Epirus it is

becoming popular. The Epirotes have come to look on the outlaws as their only hope, and the gendarmerie and troops are affected. Malik Bey, a noted outlaw, has become a popular hero, and he and his fellow Chiefs have a position similar to that of the Moreote Klephts a century ago.

Therapia, September 25, 1901.

No. 97.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 7.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October* 2, 1901.

ACCORDING to a telegram received at the Embassy last night from the Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, Mr. Shipley is informed that an attempt was made by a Bulgarian band yesterday morning to attack the railway station at Gratzko, on the Salonica–Nish line, just before a Salonica train passed through. The police met the band 500 yards from the line, and shot three of them.

Mr. Shipley adds that the Company has taken extraordinary precautions owing to the feeling of insecurity prevailing along that section of the line.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 98.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 14.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, September* 30, 1901.

DURING a recent interview with M. Sarafoff, the Bulgarian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, I inquired whether it was the case that his Government had addressed a Circular to the Bulgarian Representatives abroad, defining the attitude of the former with regard to the Macedonian Committee, and I at the same time suggested that, if such were the case, it would be in the interest of the Bulgarian Government to bring the contents of the Circular to the knowledge of the foreign Representatives.

M. Sarafoff replied that he was unaware of any such step having been taken by M. Daneff, but that, in the event of a Circular of that nature having been issued, he would be glad to adopt my suggestion.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of the Circular in question which M. Sarafoff handed to me on the 28th instant with the remark that his Government was determined to act in the spirit of M. Daneff's declaration. He had already taken measures for "interning" nearly 200 Macedonians at present in Sophia, but he was convinced that the division produced in the Committee by the secession of Boris Sarafoff and his friends would prove more effectual than any official action in reducing the entire organization to impotence as an element of disorder, and he himself regarded the Secret Committee as non-existent.

I replied that, although I welcomed the good resolutions of the Bulgarian Government, I could not, in view of the facts I had been obliged to submit to M. Sarafoff in connection with the recent capture of Miss Stone, share his satisfaction with the result so far obtained, nor could I admit that the Secret Committee was a mere chimera

It is announced in this evening's papers that, by M. Sarafoff's orders, about a dozen Macedonians of the lowest class have been sent from the capital into the interior of the Principality, but such measures cost the Government nothing, and leave the ringleaders scot-free.

Inclosure in No. 98.

Circular to Bulgarian Representatives Abroad.

LE Gouvernement Princier ne tolérera pas en Bulgarie, de la part de Comités Macédoniens, des actes qui ne seraient pas en harmonie avec les lois du pays. Contre tous actes de violence et de terrorisme que les Comités essaieraient de commettre il

est fermement décidé à sévir avec toute la rigueur des lois. D'aucune manière et sous aucun prétexte, il ne permettra que les Comités forment une sorte d'État dans l'État. S'ils veulent exister, ces Comités doivent se maintenir sur le terrain de la légalité.

Le Gouvernement Bulgare estime que cette ligne de conduite, qui lui est dictée avant tout par les lois, est aussi la plus conforme aux intérêts véritables et bien entendus de notre cause en Turquie; car, en accomplissant ainsi son devoir, il pourra être en droit de demander à son tour que les autres Gouvernements remplissent les engagements qu'ils ont pris en vertu de l'Article XXIII du Traité de Berlin.

Ayant en vue ce qui précède, vous saisirez toutes les occasions favorables qui se présenteront à vous pour déclarer comment le Gouvernement Princier entend ses devoirs et ses droits par rapport aux intérêts généraux de la Bulgarie.

*L*e 20 *Août* (2 *Septembre*), 1901.

(Translation.)

HIS Royal Highness' Government will not tolerate in Bulgaria any acts on the part of the Macedonian Committees not in accordance with the laws of the country. They are firmly resolved to pursue with the full rigour of the law all acts of violence and terrorism which the Committees may attempt to commit. They will in no way, and on no pretext, permit the Committees to constitute themselves a kind of State within the State. If the Committees desire to exist, they must keep within the bounds of the law.

The Bulgarian Government are of opinion that this line of conduct, which is dictated to them before all things by the laws, is also the course which is the most consistent with the true and well-known interests of our cause in Turkey; for in thus fulfilling their duty, they will have reason to demand in their turn that the other Governments should fulfil the engagements undertaken by them in pursuance of Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin.

In accordance with the above you will seize every occasion which may present itself to make clear the view taken by His Royal Highness' Government of their responsibilities and rights with reference to the general interests of Bulgaria.

August 20 (*September* 2), 1901.

No. 99.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 14.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, October* 6, 1901.

IN the course of conversation at his last weekly reception, Dr. Vouitch alluded to the state of affairs on the Turkish frontier as being so far satisfactory that there had been no more outrages recently, but that the endeavour to repatriate the refugees from Old Servia, who had crossed into Servian territory, had not met with success, as he had that morning received a despatch stating that two of those thus sent back had been imprisoned.

His Excellency was quite willing to give the Sultan and his Ministers due credit for their endeavours to restore and maintain order in the frontier provinces, and he mentioned that several of the more notorious leaders had been sent to Constantinople, where they would doubtless be punished. There was one, however, Issa Bolyetinatz, who had hitherto eluded apprehension, and who, on being invited by the Vali to present himself for the purpose of receiving a decoration, had discreetly declined it.

His Excellency was also willing to admit that the disturbances in Macedonia and elsewhere were not caused by the Turkish element of the population, but the fact, which he deplored, remained that the Porte did not possess sufficient authority to check them. He then alluded to a telegram published by the "Correspondenz Bureau" at Vienna to the effect that the Ambassadors at Constantinople had received such serious reports of the state of affairs in the interior of Turkey that they proposed taking some form of joint action for the purpose of restoring order. I replied that I had seen the telegram in question, but that I regarded it as a press telegram, which required confirmation.

No. 100.

Mr. McGregor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 21.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October 16, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to report that during the last ten days the Macedonian Committees in Sophia, Philippopoli, Rustchuk, and other important centres have held open-air meetings to protest against the tyranny of Turkish rule in Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople, and to demand the intervention of the Powers, with the purpose of obtaining the application of Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin.

I have received by post a printed copy of the Resolutions passed at the meeting held at Rustchuk, in which the demonstrators, after expressing "their indignation at the inhuman and anti-Christian indifference of the European Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin," made an appeal for the assistance of these Powers in order to procure an alleviation of the sufferings of the Bulgarian population in Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople.

I have the honour to inclose herewith a translation of the essential paragraphs of this document, which I believe the Austrian and German Representatives here have likewise sent home for the information of their respective Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Resolution passed by Meeting held at Rustchuk.

(Translation.)

1. WE protest loudly and energetically against the atrocities committed by the Turkish authorities on the unhappy Bulgarians in Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople.

2. We beg the European Powers, through their Diplomatic Agents at Sophia, to intervene, and to compel Turkey to cease from the massacres and cruelties perpetrated by her organs among the peaceful Bulgarian population in Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople.

3. We beg the European Powers, through their Diplomatic Agents at Sophia, and in virtue of Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin, to compel the Turks to apply the promised reforms, seeing that otherwise disorders and revolts in these Turkish provinces are inevitable, that the cup is full, and that the sufferings must have an end.

4. We beg the Bulgarian Government to fulfil its duty towards Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople by representing with due seriousness to the European Powers and to the Turkish Government the necessity of these horrors ceasing, and of the needful autonomy being granted to these provinces.

5. We beg all enlightened and peace-loving parties in Europe to intercede with their Governments for the restoration of peace in the hapless Near East.

6. We authorize the Bureau to carry out this Resolution by conveying it to the proper quarter.

(Signed) PAN. KHITOFF, *President.*
G. POPOFF, *Secretary.*

Signatures of five Members.

(L.S.) The Macedono-Adrianopolitan Society, Rustchuk.

No. 101.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 22.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, October 17, 1901.*

IN the course of conversation I asked Dr. Vouitch to-day what was his latest intelligence from the Turkish frontier.

He replied that for the moment there is absolute tranquillity, and that, as the winter season is commencing, he did not think there was any probability of its being

disturbed until the spring, when it had become a sort of tradition that disturbances might be expected. All the Governments concerned, his Excellency added, were, above all things, anxious for the preservation of peace, a fact which might be considered an additional guarantee. I asked if he did not think that danger might arise from forces independent of Governments, such, for instance, as the Macedonian Committee.

His Excellency replied that the Macedonian Committee could do no great harm without support from Bulgaria, which they had in fact received from the last Government, but that the present Government, in a Circular addressed to the Powers, had so strongly expressed their intention of suppressing that organization, that he did not apprehend much difficulty in that quarter. "Foreign politics," his Excellency added, "are for the moment absolutely quiescent, and we are entirely occupied with internal politics in connection with the new Skupshtina."

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 102.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 22.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, October 18, 1901.*

ON calling on the Turkish Minister to-day, I found him less sanguine than Dr. Vouitch as to the satisfactory state of affairs on the Servian-Turkish frontier, as he complained that an outrage had lately been committed by one of the Servian frontier guards. He admitted, however, that the attitude of the Servian Government had been quite correct, and that Dr. Vouitch was sincerely desirous of maintaining peace. He was less confident of the genuineness of the protestations made by the Bulgarian Government of their wish to suppress the Macedonian Committee, on the ground that so many of their leading men were involved in their proceedings.

No. 103.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 22, 1901.*

I HAVE received Mr. McGregor's despatch of the 30th ultimo relative to a Circular addressed by the Bulgarian Government to the Bulgarian Representatives abroad, defining its attitude towards the Macedonian Committee.

The language held by Mr. McGregor to the Bulgarian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in regard to the Committee, as reported in his despatch, has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 104.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 18.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November 10, 1901.*

REFERRING to my despatch of the 25th September, I have the honour to transmit herewith a Report by Mr. Young, of this Embassy, as to the state of affairs in Macedonia during the month of October last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 104.

Report on Events in Macedonia during October.

North-Western Frontier.

THE early and severe setting-in of winter has doubtless contributed to the absence of disorders on a large scale in the northern districts. There are indications, however, that Albanian persecution of Servians is only relaxed in so far as the exigencies of the season require. A Servian named Stergievitch, suspected of being an agent of the Servian Consul-General, was murdered by an Albanian bravo in the Mitrovitza Bazaar in broad daylight. The Albanian murderer, a notorious cut-throat, walked off undisturbed, and has been allowed to remain so.

Mitrovitza was also the scene of a small pay mutiny. The outbreak merely consisted of the usual invasion of a telegraph office by soldiery and the transmission of violent messages to head-quarters, with the usual hurried arrival of a general officer by special train with a more or less partial compliance.

At Uskub, a fire burned out a part of the town. House property in European Turkey is to a large extent insured, and many Macedonian towns have had whole quarters of hovels replaced by good houses at the expense of foreign Insurance Companies, mostly British or American. Such conflagrations have been so frequent since the Jewish quarter of Salonica was burnt out in 1891 that some Companies have withdrawn from business in Macedonia, and many do business at a loss.

Bulgarian Bands in the Interior.

Particulars have been received which give some idea of the extent of the action of the Macedonian Committee. The principal base of operations of the bands appears to be the ranges which, running southward from the Bulgarian frontier, form the eastern border of Macedonia and terminate in the Peninsula of Chalcidice. The centres of the Committee are reported to be at Kilkish for the Vilayet of Salonica, at Perlepe and Ochrida for that of Monastir, at Uskub for that of Kossovo. The following are districts infested by certain leaders :—

In the Cazas of Serres and Nevrokop, Zapro, a Bulgarian, has recently induced four villages, Dranova, Karlikeui, Salikasi, and Mertut to declare for the Exarchate. He is now recruiting in Bulgaria. Kotchio, of Serres, raised an opposition band in the Græco-Vlach interest, but was wiped out by Zapro, with nearly all his followers. The survivors have now entered the Turkish service as zaptiehs, presumably until offered another opportunity of more effectively counteracting Bulgarian propagandists. In the Caza of Demir-Hissar, the Bulgarian band of Michaili is opposed by the Kutzo-Vlach Jannakis, who is now recruiting in Servia. The Salonica–Constantinople Railway runs through these districts. The Cazas of Melnik and Petrich are the scene of the operations of Doncho, popularly credited with the capture of Miss Stone, and who recently forced the village of Ipatovo to acknowledge the Exarchy. The above are mentioned only as being prominent partisan Chiefs; they are permanently in the field, their whereabouts are approximately known, and the troops have as little difficulty in getting contact with them as they have in getting clear. But the number of bands temporarily mobilized for a distant raid can only be guessed from the probable relation of the total number to those reported on coming into collision with troops.

Such a collision was the result of a daring attempt to hold up the southerly mail at Gratzko on the Nish–Salonica line, upon which a band of Bulgarians, armed with bombs and Mausers, made a descent from a distance of fifteen hours over the mountains. They were attacked and driven off by the railway garrison with a loss of seven, whose heads were sent in to Kiupreli. Another encounter took place near the frontier at Bellovo, where, after two days' skirmishing, seven Bulgarians were wounded and taken. There were two affrays in the neighbourhood of Tikvish, and the head of a Bulgarian was sent in; he had lagged in the pursuit and shot himself to escape capture. At Melnik, in September, a band of six Bulgarians was annihilated by villagers and police. At Sborsko an unknown Bulgarian of superior education was killed and his head sent in, and another taken with bombs and rifles; a priest was beaten, crippled, on suspicion of complicity.

Albanian Bands in Monastir.

The Albanians in the Monastir Vilayet are almost as great a scourge as they are in Old Servia. As there also they are assisted by Bulgarians, their joint efforts being directed against the Turkish authority in Monastir. The district of Elbasan has recently followed the example of that of Dibra in refusing taxes and repelling all Turkish officials, which brings the border of independent Albania to within a few hours of Monastir town. The vilayet is consequently becoming a debatable land, in which Turkish garrisons hold the plains and outlaws rule in the hills. Indeed, it is difficult to draw a line between the fiefs of the independent border chieftains and the villages paying blackmail to an outlaw. Some of the latter have well-built and permanent head-quarters, and many of the former, such as Hadji Ali, are only low-born marauders who had settled down. Some of the more prominent of these outlaws are—Hassan Tchaoush (the sergeant), who is now holding three landowners to ransom; Islam Onbashi (the corporal), who, at the head of 150 Albanians, recently lifted 400 cattle, killing the herdsmen; and Marco Kapedan of Castoria; all in the Albanian interest. Milensko is a leading partisan of the Bulgarian Committee. The murders reported are naturally mostly of Turks, of whom three were killed at Resna, two at Perlepe, and two near Vodena, all connected with the Administration.

A partial failure of the crops, in contrast to the good year in Kossovo, has combined to reduce Monastir to a condition superior only to that of Epirus, the zero of European Turkey.

The Vali of Janina continues the campaign against contraband plantations in the interests of the tobacco régie.

Malik Bey, the Epirote King of the Mountains, is reported to have got two mountain guns from Greece; he is now, however, in winter quarters.

Miss Stone.

The month of October passed in ineffectual efforts to get in touch with the brigands. It is probable that the latter were well informed of this, but were waiting the raising of the money, for shortly after the subscription was closed communication was opened with Sophia through Samakov, and shortly after with Constantinople through Salonica by the intermediary of Sir A. Biliotti. Negotiations are now proceeding through the former channel. Contradictory rumours have been current as to the health and whereabouts of the prisoners. Spies of the Vali of Salonica reported Mrs. Tsilka dead and Miss Stone in Eastern Roumelia. It is also reported that both were well and in Bulgarian territory about the 20th October.

No. 105.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 9.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, November* 26, 1901.

A QUESTION addressed to the Government in the Senate by M. Mijatovitch, formerly Servian Minister at Constantinople and in London, has given the Prime Minister an opportunity of making a definite statement respecting the relations of Servia with the Porte, and of her foreign policy in general.

Going back to the events of 1898, Dr. Vouitch showed how the persecution of Servian subjects in Old Servia had occasioned diplomatic representations at Constantinople. They were, however, unavailing, as in January 1900 the Porte replied that the complaints of the Servians were groundless.

The position of the Servians was injuriously affected by this failure, and it was further prejudiced by the distrust excited in the minds of the Turkish authorities by the violent action of the Macedonian Committee in Macedonia—a distrust which, without any justification, was extended to the Servian population in Old Servia.

The improvement in the relations between Servia and Bulgaria, which became apparent about this time, increased the distrust entertained by the Turks for the Servian population of those districts, the leading members of whom were seized and unjustly accused of treasonable practices. These accusations gave rise to domiciliary visits in search of arms, resulting in numerous arrests, and had the effect of inciting the unrestrained Albanians to sanguinary onslaughts on the Servian population in

Wushirn, Kuzmishevo, and, finally, at Kolashin. The Servian Government lost no time in protesting against these outrages at the Porte, urging that Power in its own interests to maintain order. As these measures proved ineffectual, the Servian Government asked for the support of diplomatic action on the part of Russia, which was accorded to her in the fullest extent. After the Russian Consul at Uskub, Alexander Mashkoff, who was sent by the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to investigate matters, had convinced himself that the Servian complaints were well founded, the energetic intervention of the Russian Ambassador resulted in a discontinuance of the search for arms, in the liberation of the imprisoned Servians, and the recall of the Mutessarif of Pristina, as well as the arrest of the ringleaders of the Albanians.

The Servian Government, his Excellency continued, would continue to give their strictest attention to the situation in Old Servia, as Servia could not regard with indifference the destruction of the Servian element in that district and the erection of an Albanian rampart against Servia. The present Government was manifesting a most peaceable and loyal disposition towards Turkey, trusting that the Porte, in its own interests, would put an end to the lamentable state of affairs in Old Servia, more especially as Servia could have no interest in supporting or originating hostile movements in Turkey or elsewhere. If there were a repetition of these sanguinary proceedings, the Servian Government would endeavour to bring about a disarmament of the Albanians, and in the event of the Porte being unable or unwilling to restore peace in those districts, she would make an appeal to the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin, in order that the provisions of Article XXIII of that Treaty might be finally carried out.

In the course of a debate which followed, M. Mijatovitch fully recognized the correct attitude of the Servian Government towards the Porte, saying that he had himself no doubt of the Sultan's good-will in the matter, and suggested that, instead of addressing repeated energetic notes to the Porte, they should endeavour to induce the Sultan to exercise his influence over the Albanian Chiefs who were devoted to him.

The Servian Government should also take into account the national feeling which had been excited among the Albanians, and enter into direct relations with their leaders. Establishment of relations between the separate States of the Balkan Peninsula need not, he continued, be a menace against Turkey. Finally, the Servian Government should remember that the fate of Old Servia and Macedonia might, perhaps, have to be decided after a war by the Great Powers, and that Servia, when the occasion arises, must have the support of at least four of those Powers.

A former Minister of Justice considered that the policy hitherto pursued by Servia of relying first on one Power and then on another had not had good results; that Servia should rather rely for support on the Power whose history and traditions could offer a guarantee that she would have no political or other interest in impeding the national development and well-being of the Servian race in the Balkans. This Power was Russia: Servia was not, of course, to expect everything from Russia, but she should learn to stand on her own feet, and not to live in enmity with the other Slav States of the Balkan Peninsula, to which Russia is favourably inclined.

In answering a question put to him, Dr. Vouitch energetically denied that Russia had attached any conditions for her support, adding that the interest taken by Russia in Old Servia was shown by the fact that a new Russian Consulate was to be established at Pristina or at Mitrovitza. After some remarks from other Members, Dr. Vouitch, on behalf of the Government, repeated his promise to watch over the interests of Servia wherever they were assailed. Servia's national policy, he added, imposes on the Government the duty of maintaining the best possible relations with Russia. Her economical interests render necessary friendly and loyal relations with Austria-Hungary; and her financial condition renders them equally necessary with Germany and France.

The Senate finally passed a Resolution expressing satisfaction with Dr. Vouitch's language, thanking the Russian Government for its support, and placing full confidence in the patriotism and ability of the Servian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 106.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 9.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 3, 1901.*

REFERRING to Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 12th November, I have the honour to transmit herewith Mr. Young's monthly Report on the state of Macedonia during November.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 106.

Report on the Condition of Macedonia for November 1901.

Albanian border.—Albania still continues to keep all its borders in a ferment.

The grass-cutting feud with the Montenegrins, reported to have been settled by the purchase of the meadows by the Sultan, has now had to be resettled by troops being sent to burn the hay.

Threats of a popular tumult at Scutari have caused the recall of the Vali, Kiazim Pasha, who has, in his four years' administration, proved a strong and efficient Governor, and this is, indeed, the cause of his unpopularity and removal. Again, another capable official, Ali Pasha, Commandant of Gendarmerie at Ipek, being about to succeed on a second attempt in disarming the Albanians of that district, was ordered to desist.

Old Servia.—The hopes recently held out of an improvement in the condition of this district seem unlikely to be realized. Reports from Uskub represent the towns of Novi-Bazar, Djakova, and Mitrovitza as in a state of siege: the shops shut—Christians not daring to leave their houses—the doors opened by women only. The murderer of the agent of the Servian Consul-General, for whose arrest "strenuous efforts are being made," recently marched through the Mitrovitza bazaar at the head of his partisans to attend the wedding of an equally notorious friend. The two have now settled on the Mitrovitza–Novi-Bazar road, where they control the whole traffic, and from which they have just carried off another Servian.

Djakova is full of armed Albanians who have assembled to protest against the recall of Bairam, ex-Chief of Gendarmerie; he and the chief of police, both ex-brigands, after accusing each other of various crimes, met with their followers to fight the matter out in the market place, after which Bairam was induced to go to Constantinople, where he has remained. It is also intended to resist the arrest promised to the Austrian Ambassador for insult to the Austrian Vice-Consul at Prisrend. Officials recently sent to Djakova for this purpose have had to fly the town by night. The other Austrian demand for the transfer of Mehmet Pasha, Commandant of Gendarmerie at Uskub, for insult to the Austrian Consul-General, has already been carried out.

Case of Miss Stone.—No progress has been made towards the release of Miss Stone. The Turkish authorities confidently assert, as it is their interest to, that both prisoners are dead; and, at the request of Sir A. Biliotti, a Turkish official has gone to search the spot where they are said to be buried. The United States' Consul-General, after failing in his attempt to scare the Bulgarian Government with the evidence of the complicity of the Committee into coercing the negotiators, has broken off negotiations and left for Constantinople in order to bring them to terms. The Legation is trying to negotiate independently through a private agent on the frontier. It is merely a matter of bargaining.

No. 107.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received January 6.*)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 31, 1901.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a report by Mr. Young on events in Macedonia during the month of December.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 107.

Report by Mr. Young on Events in Macedonia during December 1901.

MR. FONTANA, who has now resumed his duties at Uskub, reports as unfavourably as Mr. Shipley on the state of public order in the Vilayet of Kossovo. He considers that 250 Servian families have been driven over the border since last spring by Albanian persecution—an estimate which is, however, reassuring compared with the exodus depicted by Servian officials. These unfortunate people have either voluntarily abandoned their holdings, finding the conditions of life intolerable, or have been forcibly evicted by Albanian land-grabbers. In one such case which came under Mr. Fontana's personal notice, the Albanian, after burning down the house of a Servian and driving him to take refuge in a neighbouring village, is now cultivating the land of the Servian, who has nothing left of his property but the title-deeds.

Many Servians are reported to be awaiting trial at Prishtina and Sienitza—seventeen of them for alleged complicity in the attempt to blow up Mustapha Pasha's house in July last.

The roads between Ipek, Prishtina, and Mitrovitza are still unsafe. Davidovitch, the Austrian subject reported last month to have been captured by brigands, has been released. His captors are, however, still unmolested, and the Albanian agitation arising from an attempt to arrest them is subsiding. They are reported to be relatives of Bairam, ex-brigand and Colonel of Gendarmes at Prizrend. Summoned to Constantinople for rioting, as previously reported,* he has now returned, with the official sanction of a decoration, to be Colonel of Gendarmes at Prishtina. Previous to the Davidovitch affair, he was credited with being in Austrian pay; he now professes Servian sympathies. As he is an influential personage locally, his new rôle should help the Servians, and, in view of his recent visit to Constantinople, may indicate a change for the better in the Palace policy towards them.

Another reappearance of a prominent local politician is that of Mehmet Pasha, recently transferred at the request of the Austrian Embassy from the Colonelcy of Gendarmerie at Uskub,* nominally to an Anatolian post, but now quietly sent back to Old Servia with a military appointment at Mitrovitza. Both Bairam and Mehmet are Albanians of such influence and character that their future conduct will either ameliorate or aggravate the lot of the Servians. Arif Pasha, the new Mutessarif of Prishtina, is still in Constantinople, and Prishtina is strongly held by the Mufti, a fanatical and wealthy Albanian, notorious as an exactor of forced labour from the Servians, and as a petty tyrant generally. The Mutessarif of Ipek, Ali Pasha, whose attempts to control the Albanians have frequently been reported, has had to resign for want of support, and has been replaced by Kiazim Bey, of Uskub. A recent move by Ali to arrest some Albanian villagers was checkmated by their women and children, who blocked the way and jeeringly dared the troops to lay a finger on them. The acceptance of Ali Pasha's resignation was due to the Mollah Zekko, who obtained the recall of Suleiman Pasha in June. The Mollah Zekko is an interesting character; he started life as a mule-driver, and now aspires to the hegemony of autonomous Albania.

There was a pay mutiny at Uskub early in December. A fact illustrative of the terms on which Albania is held is that on the dispatch of certain reliefs to the battalion stationed at Dibra, the depleted local Treasury was drawn on for £ T. 500 for "travelling expenses."

* *Vide* Report for November.

The condition of Monastir Vilayet was, owing to the Vali's senility, recently described by Sir A. Biliotti as intolerable. This appears to have been realized also in other quarters, for the Greek Minister took steps to have Abdul Kerim replaced, and tried to interest the Embassies in the matter. General Edib Pasha has now been appointed to this important post. While in a subordinate position at Adrianople Edib was noted for his success in dealing with the unruly elements of that vilayet, and it may be hoped that he is equal to his present task. M. Pissurica reports that travel in the interior has become impossible; even if the danger to life and liberty from brigands be escaped it is impossible to elude the foot-pads. A colporteur of the Bible Society reports that twice in a month he was held up and robbed.

A complicated story is the sequel to the capture of five Bulgarian peasants of Slepze. These unhappy men came to terms with their captors for £ T. 90, and were let go. They were then taken up by the authorities for having dealings with outlaws, and only got off with a bribe of £ T. 30. They had, however, in their distress been rash enough to apply for help to the Consulates, and had thereby irritated their Turkish neighbours; they were consequently ambushed and three of them killed. The usual retaliation followed, and two Turkish watchmen were found dead the following evening.

Marco Kapedan has been actively pushing his Bulgarian propaganda. Early in December he burnt down the Church of the Hellenized Bulgarians of Dragouch, between Monastir and Florina. This outrage, which will probably rally these recalcitrant Slavs to the national cause, has been the subject of complaint to the authorities by the Greek Consulate.

The Greek priest of Banitza was killed on his way to Florina, and another murder, though less cold-blooded, has been that of the brother and agent of Yovantze, of Castoria, who has been previously mentioned as having made a vocation of political accusation. The body, when found, had the tongue cut out—a sufficient explanation of the motive. It is reported that the prisons of Castoria and Konitza are full of persons awaiting trial on such accusations, and that others have escaped only by sacrificing all they possess.

One particularly revolting crime may be noticed. A girl of 16 was carried off by Turks from the village of Topoyanni, near Kirtzovo. The mother, after trying in vain to get her daughter back, started on foot and alone to Monastir, to appeal to the Vali, and was murdered on the road.

The north-east of Macedonia has been fairly quiet. A frontier incident which occurred at Chil Tepe, on the Eastern Roumelia frontier, should be mentioned. The frontier guards, both Turks and Bulgarians, are in the habit, by mutual consent, of crossing the frontier to avoid détours when passing from one frontier post to another. A party of three Bulgarians were accordingly crossing a wooded tract of Turkish territory by night when they were beset by Turks; two escaped, the third was taken, his head struck off and sent in to the Kaïmakam, after being paraded in the neighbouring villages. On another occasion there was an exchange of shots between Turks and Bulgarians who were engaged in turning back Pomak emigrants trying to cross into Turkey.

This Mussulman emigration into Macedonia has lately assumed proportions which have caused criticism of Bulgarian toleration of Mussulman subjects; it is more generally attributed to Mussulman intolerance of Christian supremacy.

Since Mr. Dickinson's failure to obtain the effective co-operation of the Bulgarian Government, both the conduct and the venue of the negotiations in regard to Miss Stone have been changed. They are now in the hands of the Legation, and are being conducted through Salonica and the Turkish frontier, where the First Dragoman is at present in treaty with the agents of the captors on a basis of payment of the 60,000 dollars collected, the recipients to have sufficient "law" and the payment to take place at a spot on the frontier-line.

Sir A. Biliotti has information from Kresna, south of Rilo, that the ladies are well and that letters from them will reach Salonica in about a week, though the winter and troops make communication difficult. Mr. Elliot is informed, privately, that they are at Leshko, also in the Rilo district, and close to where they were taken. He also learns that Doncho, the brigand previously mentioned as being credited with their capture, has now broken with his former employers, the "old" Committee, and is trying to rescue the lady. His first attempt is reported to have failed, though he succeeded in wounding the brigand chief in charge. The situation is not without danger to Miss Stone.

No. 108.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received January* 8.)

My Lord, *Athens, January* 1, 1902.

M. ZAÏMIS asked me to-day whether I could give him any exact news of the state of the district of Monastir. The accounts which reached him of the barbarities of the Bulgarian bands of Petroff and Marcoff were most appalling. The last Governor who succeeded Seifullah was lamentably slack, and it is to be hoped the present one will put down these political brigands. All the influence the Greek Government can employ will be in favour of the Turkish authorities' efforts to maintain order in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 109.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 3.)

My Lord, *Athens, January* 28, 1902.

AS possibly it may at some time be of interest to compare Hellenic views with those of other nationalities on the subject of Epirus, I venture to inclose a précis of letters published in the "Acropolis" in November last by M. Christovasili, who is the Secretary of the Hellenismos Society.

He makes the Viosa the northern limit of the Greek aspirations, and admits with sorrow the diminution in the numbers of the Greek population of Epirus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Précis of M. Christovasili's Letters published in the "Acropolis" of November 1901.

EPIRUS is mainly inhabited by two races, the Hellenic and the Albanian; there are no Slavonic villages, and the Slavonic spirit does not exist.

Besides the Greeks and Albanians, there are about ten Vlach villages, of which the inhabitants, besides having a most Greek habit of thought, speak Greek as their mother tongue, differing in no way in civil and religious customs from the Greeks. Many distinguished Greeks are of Vlach extraction, Coletti, Zalocosta, Costas Crystallis, Tositsas, Stournaras, and Averoff. Most of the merchants and leading persons at Janina and Metsovo are Vlachs.

These Vlachs of Epirus would esteem it an offence to be considered of a comrade race with the Roumans. A proof of this is given by the celebrated propagandist, Apostolos Margarites, who wastes millions of Rouman francs in Macedonia and Epirus to tempt the Vlachs to reassume Roumanian nationality; but with all his efforts, aided by the Turkish authorities, he has entirely failed in converting a single Epirot Vlach. While, as for the Roumanian gymnasium existing in Janina up to last June—without any practical results—merely as a proof (advertised by the attacks of the Greek press), that the Roumanian flood has reached as far as Janina, the rent of the school and the salary of a master have been paid for years without a single pupil. It was dissolved this year after the interview at Abbazia.

Besides the Vlachs in the villages and towns, there are about 700 families of Albanian nomad Vlachs who take up their winter quarters in Prevesa, Parga, Paramythia, Philista, Avlona, and Musaka, camping in the summer on the Zagorion Mountains and the south-west of Macedonia. These nomads can generally speak Greek, Vlach, and Albanian, but only write in Greek. They are always baptized by Greek priests.

There is also in Janina a colony of over 2,000 Jews, and many others are scattered about in towns of Epirus, exercising various trades. They are most

frequently tinkers. This colony is said to have existed in Epirus before the birth of Jesus Christ. These Jews only speak Greek, which is the only trade language of Epirus.

Of the Greeks and Albanians in Epirus, some are Christians, some Mussulmans, whilst the Vlachs and Albanians Vlachs are all Christians. The Jews profess their own religion.

The only Turks in Epirus are officials and soldiers who come and go. Of the native Mohammedans in Epirus most are Albanians, the Greek Mohammedans mostly live at Janina, Prevesa, Louros, a suburb of Arta, Paramythia, Konitsa; but they speak Greek. Their ancestors embraced the Mohammedan religion when the country was conquered by the Turks.

Till about twelve years ago the Turkish Tribunals in Epirus used only the Greek language, but owing to the want of tact of a patriotic headmaster of the gymnasium of Janina, who boasted of this use of the immortal Greek language, the Turkish authorities woke up, dismisssed the gymnasiarch, and forbade the use of the Greek language in the Tribunals, thus obliging many of the lawyers either to learn Turkish or abandon their profession. But, notwithstanding this, the use of the Greek tongue has not been entirely abolished in the Turkish Tribunals of Yanina and other towns of Epirus, for, besides the presiding Judges, the other members of the Courts, who are local people, speak Greek, and are compelled to express themselves to the Turkish Judge through interpreters.

The Christians of Epirus from the Arachthos to Bediana and from Metsovo to Avlona, be they Greeks, Vlachs, or Albanians, are of the Orthodox Eastern Church.

The Mussulmans of Epirus possess few mosques and priests, and are very slack in their religion. They are generally uncircumcised, and do not fast at Ramazan. Indeed, when the Turkish authorities have endeavoured to impose circumcision of Epirot children, it has produced an outbreak as was lately the case at Philiatre.

The Zosimayas school in Janina is Greek, and in it the sons of many of the leading Mussulman Beys have been educated, such as Turkhan Pasha, Abentin Pasha, Ismaïl Kemel Bey, &c.

The Vilayet of Janina is divided into three portions:—

(*a*.) That between the Arachthos (Arta) and Thyanis (Kalama);

(*b*.) That between the Thyanis (Kalama) and Aoos (Viosa);

(*c*). That between the Aoos (Viosa) and Apsos (Semeni).

Officially the province is divided into four Departments, under a general Governor at Janina:

A. Department at Janina with six Eparchies: Janina, Paramythia, Filiati, Konitsa, Metsovo, and Lieskoviki.

B. Department of Prevesa with three Eparchies: Prevesa, Luros, and Philippiadæ, and Margariti.

C. Department of Argyrocastro, with six Eparchies: Argyrocastro, Pogonia, Premeti, Delvini, Liapuri, and Tepeleni.

D. Department of Berati, with four Eparchies: Berat, Avlona, Gousnitska, and Louanitska.

In the portion of Epirus between the Rivers Arta and Kalamas, the population is thus distributed:—

The Eparchy of *Janina* contains 90,000 souls: of which 80,000 are Greek (76,000 Christians and 4,000 Mussulmans), 5,000 Vlachs, and 2,500 Albanian Vlachs (all Christians), and 2,500 Jews in the town of Janina.

Luro Philippiadæ.—14,000 Greeks (13,500 Christians and 500 Mahommedans).

Prevesa.—10,000 Greeks (9,000 Christians and 500 Mahommedans).

Margariti.—24,000: of which 19,500 are Albanians and 4,500 Greeks (1,000 Mahommedans, mostly Albanians, and 9,000 Christians).

Paramythia.—15,000: 7,500 Greeks, 7,500 Albanians (9,000 Christians, 6,000 Mussulmans).

Metsovo.—5,500 (all Christians): 3,000 Greeks and 2,500 Vlachs.

Konitsa.—17,500 Greeks (17,400 Christians, 100 Mussulmans).

In the second portion of Epirus between the Rivers Kalama and Viosa the numbers are as follows:—

Kourenta.—5,000: all Greeks and Christians.

Filiatæ.—25,000: of which 15,000 are Greeks and Christians, and 10,000 Albanians and Mussulmans.

Argyrocastro.—31,500: 18,500 Greeks and 13,000 Albanians (25,000 Christians and 6,500 Albanian Mussulmans).

Pogonia.—21,500 : all Greeks and Christians.
Premeti.—8,000 : all Albanians (3,000 Christians and 5,000 Mussulmans).
Delvini.—20,000 : 18,000 Greeks and Christians, 2,000 Albanians and Mussulmans.
Cheimarras Liapouria.—16,000 : 4,000 Greeks and 12,000 Albanians (8,000 Christians, 8,000 Mahommedans).
Tepeleni.—8,000 : all Albanians (3,000 Christians and 5,000 Mahommedans).
Avlona.—27,500 : all Albanians (7,000 Christians and 20,000 Mahommedans), with a certain number of nomad Albanian Vlachs.

The third portion between the Viosa and Semeni is inhabited entirely by Albanians, excepting 1,000 Greeks: Berat, 120,000 (80,000 Mussulmans, 40,000 Christians).

In the remaining part, Lescoviki, &c., 64,500 (31,000 Christian, 33,500 Mahommedans).

This third portion has no relation to Hellenism, beyond that of the Tosk tribes being under the control of the Vali of Janina—that is to say, of Epirus.

In the two first portions the races are as follows:—

Greeks between the Arta and Kalama	136,000	
Greeks between the Kalama and Viôsa	105,500	
		241,500
Vlachs and Albanian Vlachs		12,500
Albanians between the Arta and Kalama	27,000	
Albanians between the Kalama and Viôsa	80,000	
		107,500
Jews		2,500
Total		364,000

The religions are as follows:—

Christians between the Arta and Kalama		147,000
Christians between the Kalama and Viôsa		108,000
Total Christians		255,000
Mahommedans between the Arta and Kalama..		26,500
Mahommedans between the Kalama and Viôsa		56,000
Total Mahommedans		82,500

The writer concludes by saying that should the Ottoman Empire in Europe be dissolved and Greece re-establish the rights derived from history, geography, and descent, the Greek and Albanian frontier, if not the Semini, should be the Viosa. He adds in a postscript that since the Berlin Treaty, when their number was over 300,000, more than 60,000 Greeks have left Epirus.

No. 110.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 3.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 29, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the monthly Report for January on events in Macedonia prepared by Mr. Young.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 110.

Macedonia Summary for Month of January.

A CHANGE of nomenclature has been made in Old Servia. Novi-Bazar and its caza have been attached to the Prishtina Sandjak, and the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar is replaced by that of Sienitza. Geographical reasons are assigned for the change, but the advantages of jerrymandering are sufficiently obvious even when party Government is still in its simplest expression of *divide ut imperes.* Old Servia.

Two Servian villages, Zrepolye and Uglari, near Kolaschin, in the district of Mitrovitza, were late in December surrounded by Albanians and kept for some days in a state of siege. This was done on the usual pretext of information as to concealed arms, but the houses do not appear to have been entered. At Panecharova, near Malesh, forty rifles were found under the house of a schoolmaster, but he, it is to be observed, was a Bulgarian. Seven Servians have been arrested for arson at Sienitza.

Mehmet Pasha's return to Kalkandelen has at once been signalized by an outbreak of disorder, which Mr. Fontana suggests was got up by him to give an opportunity of showing off his authority. His son having quarrelled with a neighbour, Yusuf Bey, as to some land which Mehmet had sold during his recent visit to Constantinople, raised a force of several hundred of his father's clan. Yusuf responded by calling out his adherents, and Kalkandelen was invaded one morning by some 1,500 armed Albanians. The markets were closed, the houses barred, and the principal Moslem and Christian citizens, meeting in secret conclave, decided to telegraph to Yildiz, as the only means of averting a fight, with its sequel of general looting. It is with the latter object that the clansmen have the inconvenient practice of settling their differences in the streets of the local centre. Orders came from Yildiz to Mehmet to preserve order, and he, who was probably only waiting for this, had the Albanians withdrawn, and reconciled the disputants, as he might have done at first. Mehmet is in no hurry to take up the subordinate police post assigned to him at Prishtina. Albanian border.

Shakir Pasha, the newly-appointed Vali of Scutari, is reported in the Bulgarian press to have addressed a sermon to an assembly of Beys on the evils of the vendetta as hindering the opening up of the country. Though his arguments might have been better chosen, he is reported to have received satisfactory assurances. The gazetting of several Chieftains, among them the notorious Usen Bey, to military titles and orders reveals a stronger inducement to good behaviour.

The general moral tension, combined with the universal practice of carrying arms, makes the least incident as dangerous as a match in a magazine. A common street occurrence in Perlepe—the settlement of a private quarrel with pistols "on sight"—led to a general fusillade, in which two persons were killed and two wounded. Armed Bulgarians and Turks were hurrying up from all sides, when a passing cavalry patrol succeeded in restoring order. Monastir.

The Embassy has received another list of crimes, most of which are traceable to the Committees. For instance, on the 11th, at Konomblati, near Kastoria, a supposed informer, the Bulgarian Georghi, was murdered; and on the 13th three women who had denounced the murderer were found dead in a field, mutilated in a manner too bad to describe, but significant of their offence. On the 12th, in the neighbouring village of Roulia, an old man whose son had become a gendarme in the personal service of an anti-Bulgar official, was killed. Thus five murders, four being of great brutality, occurred in three consecutive days within one small district. Bulgarian Committees in Monastir.

The Turkish officials in these matters are indifferent or helpless; indeed, the Kaïmakam of Kastoria, the Chief of Gendarmes of Koritza, and the Judge were at the time under trial for peculation. The extortions of the Committees and their severity in dealing with recalcitrants or renegades do not seem to affect the popularity of the propaganda. At Broussnik, an hour from Monastir, a Bulgarian priest having died while in prison for extortion from his parishioners for political purposes, the Monastir Bulgarian community decided to give him a public funeral, which was carried out with enthusiasm, the Archbishop, the schools, and the notables marching out to Broussnik in procession.

Marco Kapedan has been active, and has threatened the Greek village of Sorovitz, on the Monastir–Salonica line, unless it joins his party. The Greek Consulate is taking steps for its protection.

Of late the attention of Greek journalists and politicians has been much occupied with Southern Macedonia. An alleged interview with Mr. Zaimis, published in a Vienna paper, in which the Premier was made to say that the Macedonian question was a matter Greek interests in Monastir.

for the Great Powers alone, in which the Balkan States, including Greece, could have no say, raised an outcry.

A gift of 1,500 fr., a large sum for an Athenian, to the Macedonian Brotherhood shows that practical expressions of sympathy are not wanting. The suggestion made for a revival of the British Vice-Consulate at Monastir is another symptom of anxiety for Greek predominance in Southern Macedonia, formerly unquestioned, but now menaced by the activity of the Committees and by the avowed withdrawal of Roumania from a propaganda which involved her in large outlay for the benefit of Greek political interests. The appointment of Edib Pasha as Vali is considered a factor in Greece's favour. He is practically a native, speaks Romaic, and in his previous posts at Adrianople and as Governor of Mitylene, stood well with the Greek communities. He is consequently attacked by the Bulgarian press as a Philhellene, and viewed askance by the Moslem officials as a "Yanina Turk."

Epirus. Osman Pasha, Vali of Yanina, recently arbitrarily exiled three Mussulman notables. The Grand Vizier sent orders for their recall and trial, which Osman ignored. An Iradé, however, forced him to bring them to Yanina, where their arrival became the object of a great Mussulman demonstration of so hostile a character to himself that Osman has shut himself up in a panic.

Disorder continues to increase. At Lescovitza a band, taking with them a village priest as decoy, tried to make an entry into the house of a wealthy landowner, Bacolo by name. The priest, on being sent forward to get the door opened, instead of doing so, shouted a warning, and was at once shot. Bacolo successfully defended his house, killing one brigand and wounding two, but the Vali has since had him brought to Yanina to be "squeezed" for illegal possession of fire-arms.

Constantinople, January 29, 1902.

No. 111.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 25.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 19, 1902.

SIR ALFRED BILIOTTI reports from Salonica, under yesterday's date, that he hears that all officers and men on furlough have been recalled, that no fresh leave is granted, and that Commanding Officers have received orders to be ready to march at a moment's notice. It does not appear, however, that the regiments are being put on a war footing, or that any orders for the mobilization of the Redifs have been given, so that it would seem as if the measures taken were caused by the unrest throughout Macedonia rather than by fear of trouble from outside.

No doubt this internal agitation has been increased by the circumstances connected with Miss Stone's continued detention by the brigands and the activity of the troops, who, although kept away from the district where the brigands are supposed to be, are naturally on the alert in the hope of capturing them when Miss Stone has been given up, and they are allowed to move forward.

Under the same date, Mr. Fontana reports from Uskub that the notorious Mullah Zekko has been murdered at Ipek by an Albanian officer, that the town is in a state of ebullition, and that it is feared that there will be much fighting and bloodshed. The Mullah Zekko is described as a man of great personal influence and popularity, who has risen from a donkey-driver to his present position, and was recently decorated by the Sultan. He was said to aspire to the leadership of the party who are in favour of Albanian autonomy, but whether his death is to be ascribed to a local feud or to other causes is not clear.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 112.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, February* 26, 1902.

COUNT LÜTZOW tells me that seriously disquieting reports have been received, both here and at St. Petersburgh, from the Austrian and Russian Agents in the Balkan

Peninsula, which give reason for fearing that about the middle of March a rising will be attempted in Macedonia. I was informed by his Excellency that views were being loyally exchanged by the Russian Government with the Austrian Government.

No. 113.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Salonica, February* 28, 1902.

I HAVE just received information from a source which I consider reliable to the effect that the Macedonian Committee intend, within the two next months, to cause a certain number of Mussulmans to be massacred in different parts with a view to promote retaliation on their part, and compel Europe to intervene in European Turkey.

I am further informed from the same source that Sarafoff is in Macedonia organizing the project mentioned above in Strumnitsa and in two other centres in Salonica as well as in the district of Perlepe in the Vilayet of Monastir.

(Sent to the Embassy.)

No. 114.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February* 28, 1902.

M. MÉTAXAS states that he has received a long report on the condition of Macedonia, which has been sent to the Greek Representatives accredited to the Great Powers by the Greek Government.

According to this report, in the district of Monastir, and more recently in that of Salonica, murders were of frequent occurrence.

The hope was entertained by the Greek Government that the Great Powers would be disposed to make renewed representations to the Turkish Government as to the necessity for taking effective measures with the object of securing tranquillity and order. M. Métaxas had instructions to inquire whether His Majesty's Government would be willing to authorize you to join in such representations, and also whether they might not perhaps instruct His Majesty's Representative at Sophia to join in impressing on the Bulgarian Government the expediency of keeping in check the Bulgarian agitators.

His Majesty's Government are disposed to join in representations in the above sense.

I should be glad to learn whether instructions on the subject have been received by any of your colleagues.

No. 115.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February* 28, 1902.

MACEDONIA.

With reference to my telegram of the 28th February to Sir N. O'Conor, which has been repeated to your Excellency, I should be glad to know whether the Government to which you are accredited are in receipt of a similar communication from the Greek Government, and, if so, what view they take of the question.

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* Also to Lord Currie, Sir F. Plunkett, Sir C. Scott, and Sir F. Lascelles.

No. 116.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, March* 1, 1902

FOLLOWING, with reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 28th February.

No communication has yet been made to Italy by the Greek Government.

M. Prinetti has, however, informed me that the reports of the Greek Agent are confirmed by those he has received from Italian Consuls.

No. 117.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, March* 1, 1902.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed me that communication from the Greek Government, referred to in your telegram of the 28th February, has not been received here yet; he promised to communicate the reply of the German Government to me as soon as they have taken a decision. Dr. von Mühlberg thought, however, that his Government would hesitate to make joint representations to the Porte regarding the taking of more effective measures, from which an insurrection might result.

No. 118.

Mr. Herbert to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, March* 1, 1902.

NO communication has as yet been received by M. Delcassé from the Greek Representative here with regard to Macedonian affairs, which formed the subject of your Lordship's telegram of the 28th February, and for the present, therefore, he is unable to express any opinion.

No. 119.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, March* 1, 1902.

MACEDONIA. The Austrian Ambassador informs me that he has exchanged views with Count Lamsdorff respecting the disquieting rumours referred to in Sir F. Plunkett's telegram of the 26th February.

Rumours of a similar nature have been on previous occasions received at this time of the year, and it was agreed to take the same steps as then, namely, to make representations to the Porte, and use firm language of advice and warning to the Governments of the Balkan States.

No indications of any fresh Armenian trouble, or of a combination between the Armenian and Macedonian agitators, appear to have reached the Russian Government.

No. 120.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, March* 2, 1902.

INSTRUCTIONS alluded to in your Lordship's telegram of the 28th February have not yet been received by any of my colleagues.

No. 121.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Salonica, March* 2, 1902.

ACCORDING to information just received from Monastir, the first part of my telegram of the 28th ultimo represents exactly also the state of affairs in that vilayet, with the aggravating circumstance that the Mussulmans are greatly exasperated, and if any of them are massacred, retaliation on a scale hitherto unknown is certain to take place.

No distinction being possible between the Christians of the different races in Macedonia, owing to the Bulgarian being the language spoken by all, the retaliation will not attain Bulgarians only. Under these circumstances all Christians live in terror.

(Sent to Embassy.)

No. 122.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 3.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 22, 1902.

WITH reference to the murder by an Albanian officer of the Mullah Zekko at Ipek, which I reported in my despatch of the 19th instant, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub telegraphs that the assassin retired to his house or tower with a large party of followers, and was only compelled to surrender when a cannon was brought up. The Mutessarif confined him in the Konak; and on his refusal to comply with the demands of the dead Mullah's partisans that the murderer should be handed over to them, an attack was made on the Officer Commanding at the Konak. In the fierce fight which ensued some soldiers and a considerable number of Albanians were killed and wounded, the total casualties on both sides amounting, it is said, to as many as sixty.

The arrival of the Commandant of Mitrovitza with two battalions has restored the town of Ipek to comparative order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 123.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 3.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 24, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that information received through a private and confidential channel tends to confirm and determine the rumours current of late of imminent disturbances in Macedonia of a serious character. According to this information, which is from a Greek source, all Macedonia, with the exception of 130 villages, has been brought within the Bulgarian insurrectionary organization, and measures have been taken to coerce these recalcitrant villages into temporary submission. A general rising has been ordered for the 1st March, or failing that, the 1st April or 11th May. The following five places are said to have been selected as sufficiently remote to be suitable points at which to declare open revolt: Tikvish or Kavadar, east of Perlepe; Ekshisu, about 10 miles south of Florina; Zagoritsa, between Ekshisu and Kastoria; Perlepe and Pozartsiou, near Vodena, which is probably Bozadji-burnou, an important strategic point where the rail and road to Monastir cross on entering the hills.

It is to be observed that all these points are west of the central valley of the Vardar, and, excepting Tikvish, which is a notorious Bulgarian revolutionary centre, all within a comparatively small area on the southern border. It is in this area that the propaganda of the Bulgarian Exarchate has encountered most opposition from Greek and Bulgarian orthodoxy, and such revelations as this of revolutionary designs are not their east effective weapon.

It is to be feared, however, that, should any serious disturbance occur in the spring, it will not be confined to the south of Macedonia, but will also include the purely

Bulgarian districts in the north and east. The plans of the revolutionists seem to be more serious and better developed than previously, but, on the other hand, I believe the Ottoman Government to be fully informed of all that is going on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 124.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 3.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, February* 26, 1902.

DURING the course of a visit which I paid to the Foreign Department to-day, Count Lützow told me that the news received lately from the Near East was very unsatisfactory, and was engaging the serious attention of the Austro-Hungarian Government.

I said I hoped that this was only the annual spring revival of the rumours of troubles to break out in the Balkans when the snow melts.

Count Lützow replied that this time serious danger seemed to be really threatening, and very soon. The reports which have reached both the Austro-Hungarian and the Russian Governments from their agents in the Balkan Peninsula agree in warning that there is reason to believe the Macedonians propose to attempt a rising about the middle of this next month. The plan of the conspirators is understood to be based on examples furnished by the Anarchists.

I thanked Count Lützow for so kindly giving me this information, but added that I was surprised to hear that the Macedonians should choose this moment for a rising; the good understanding which was believed to exist between Vienna and St. Petersburgh seemed to me calculated to prevent any such danger in the Balkans at present.

His Excellency replied that the feeling between the two Governments of Austria-Hungary and of Russia was entirely satisfactory, and that the visit of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand to St. Petersburgh had had excellent effect. The two Governments were now exchanging views in regard to these Macedonian intrigues, and he had pleasure in bearing witness to the loyalty with which the Russian Government were behaving towards this Government in the matter.

No. 125.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, March* 5, 1902.

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs hopes that the Macedonian danger may have been exaggerated. He seems, however, to think that the action of Austria and Russia, as proposed, would be very timely, provided that the Turks were not induced to take repressive measures of too great severity.

No communication has been made to the French Government by that of Greece.

No. 126.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 6.)

My Lord, *Athens, February* 28, 1902.

M. ZAÏMIS told me to-day that he had represented in London the extremely dangerous state of affairs in Macedonia, where an outbreak seems inevitable.

Not only in the district of Monastir, but in that of Salonica also, the Bulgarian agitators are preparing disorders; the Bishops in the latter districts have been prevented by threats from visiting the villages; the police appear often to be bribed or paid by the Bulgarian Committees; the Governor at Salonica has no money to make suitable preparation against the expected revolt, whilst the Governor at Monastir (though said to be capable) is ill.

Arms have been even bought here for the Bulgarian agitators without the knowledge, at the time, of the Greek Government, which have not been able to stop them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 127.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, March 6, 1902.*

WITH reference to the Macedonian agitation and to your Lordship's telegram of the 28th February. Yesterday, at his weekly reception, the Minister for Foreign Affairs received a communication from the Greek Chargé d'Affaires.

He replied that he would, that day, telegraph instructions to the Italian Ambassador at Constantinople that, as soon as his colleagues had received instructions to make the representations to the Porte suggested by the Greek Government, he should associate himself with them in making it.

No. 128.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Egerton.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 6, 1902.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 28th February.

You will have received copies of my telegrams to Sir N. O'Conor of the 28th February, and to His Majesty's Representatives accredited to the Great Powers of the same date.

We have only heard so far of the receipt of the Greek communication at Vienna. We understand, however, that the Governments of Russia and Austria have agreed, as on former occasions, to address the Governments of the Balkan States in firm language of warning and advice, and to make representations at Constantinople.

It will be necessary to deal cautiously with this matter, for it would be extremely unfortunate if the Turkish Government should have recourse to excessive measures of repression. The effect of such measures might be to provoke the disturbances of which we are all anxious to avoid the possibility.

No. 129.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 10.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, March 5, 1902.*

I AM inclined to think that the reports originating from a Greek source, which it was my duty to submit to your Lordship in my despatch of the 24th ultimo, have gone the round of the European Chanceries, while information from other directions has rather lent weight and importance to the gloomy anticipations therein described.

Mr. Young's monthly analysis, herewith inclosed, of the reports received at this Embassy from His Majesty's Consuls in Macedonia certainly affords a striking list of disorders and crimes in connection with the insurrectionary movement; but, still, I can hardly read into them that a general revolutionary outbreak is imminent, notwithstanding the undoubted activity of the Committees. That the general condition of affairs in Macedonia, more especially in those regions where the Albanian and Bulgarian element largely prevails, is full of danger cannot be denied.

I do not, however, think we need anticipate an outbreak assuming proportions such as would convulse the whole of Macedonia or compromise the peace of the Balkan Peninsula, though the condition of affairs is certainly worse than it was at this spring season either last year or the year before, when I did not hesitate to give it as my opinion that there would be no general disturbance, in those regions. I am by no means so confident now, for I consider the situation decidedly more critical and fraught with greater danger to peace than at any time within my experience here.

In communicating to the Sublime Porte from time to time information which has reached me from the Consuls in Macedonia, complaining of the action of the Ottoman authorities, I have lost no opportunity of impressing upon the Ministers the vital importance of not allowing the repression of crime and disorder to leave the legal path and degenerate into massacre. Two days ago I had occasion to repeat this advice in submitting a report to the Grand Vizier.

In reply, his Highness sent me word through Mr. Block that he had quite recently telegraphed to the Valis of Adrianople, Salonica, Monastir, and Kossovo, instructing them to maintain order in their districts in a legal and proper way, and not to allow the Turkish population to take the law into their own hands and make reprisals on the Bulgarian agitators. The Ottoman Government, his Highness said, was in a very awkward and difficult position. If the Imperial Government exercised its legitimate right and punished the offenders, they were accused by the partisans of the Revolutionary Committees and the European press of exercising undue severity, and if they allowed the culprits to escape their due punishment, they only encouraged them to commit further crimes and to plunge the country into anarchy and disorder.

Inclosure 1 in No. 129.

Report by Mr. Young on Events in Macedonia during February 1902.

Rumoured Rising.

THE chief interest of events during last month lies in their relation to the general rising predicted locally. It has long been evident that neither Bulgarian politicians nor Bulgar propagandists would rest satisfied with the supremacy secured over the Helleno-Vlach and Servian interests; that either it would have to be established on a permanent footing shortly or the effort to maintain it relaxed: in a word, that either a crisis or a collapse was imminent.

Bulgars and Hellenes in Monastir.

The rumours of rising come mostly through Hellenic channels, and originate either in the patriotism of a Greek pressman or in the revelations of some Hellenized Bulgar who has been admitted or impressed in the organization of the "Committees." Besides reporting insurrectionary arrangements for the Hellenized districts on the southern border, they show the severe pressure from the Committees to which these districts are now subjected. The Hellenes and Hellenized Bulgars are admittedly in a minority, but the impossibility of getting reliable statistics is shown by a comparison of the official estimates of the Bulgar population of the vilayet in the Bulgarian Exarchate's Report for last year and in the Greek Consular Reports for 1899. The Bulgarian estimate claims 346,348 Bulgars, of which about two-thirds are said to have adhered to the Exarchate. The Greek version is 87,159 "schismatics," *i.e.*, Exarchate Bulgars; and supposing this to be two-thirds of the whole Bulgar population, the Hellenic total is only about one-third of that of the Bulgarian estimate. The latter, in fact, exceeds the figure given by the Greeks as the total population of the vilayet, including Jews, Moslems, and their own Orthodox.

Bulgar Bands in Monastir.

"Reformi." In the Kastoria district the organ of the Committee reports the "removal" of the "Grecomanes" for informing (names and villages given), also the murder of an oppressive Turkish Bey of the village of Sviataya Nyedyelya.

The same source reports seventy persons arrested in Zagoritsani for complicity with the Committees, on the information of the Orthodox priest. They have now been released by the Turks, and the priest has left the country.

"Levant Herald." The Constantinople press reports a fight between Adam Bit, a cattle-lifter and propagandist, and Turkish troops, near Monastir. Three other skirmishes are reported, at Serfidje, on the Greek frontier, where two brigands were killed, at Diskat, and near Kastoria, where Papa Trigo is said to have been taken.

Official reports confirm the shooting at Tirnovo of Demetri Tsiona, a Hellenized Bulgar, for relations with the Turkish police. The Committee's organ remarks that the deceased had had many warnings, and that his final removal at a wedding caused general satisfaction. Mr. Pissurica. "Reformi."

At Madjoumista, near Perlepe, a schoolmaster, Milan Tziorbeff, was hewed in pieces by four youths, emissaries of the local "Committee," for encouraging the villagers to resist its exactions. The murderers were caught and confessed Sir A. Biliotti.

The village of Ekshi-su, mentioned in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 24th ultimo as one of the centres of the rising, has been raided by police for relations with Marco Kapedan, a successful Bulgarizing brigand. Twenty villagers were examined, and confessed under the stick; they have been sent to Monastir. Mr. Pissurica.

Ghevgheli, another Committee centre, has also been raided for arms, but without result, as warning had been given. This place and Tikvish, also near the Salonica–Uskub line, are of importance as being the communicating links between the Committee's campaigns on the south in Monastir, and to the north of the rail on the Bulgarian border.

Bands on the Bulgarian Border.

The bands in this latter region are rather different in character and in plan of campaign. In the south they are mostly brigands temporarily employed in propaganda by systematic pillaging and proselytizing of the Hellenes; in the north, where Hellenes are few, the bands are propagandists, temporarily employing themselves as brigands for the purpose of carrying on guerilla with the Turkish troops. These latter bands use Bulgaria as a base, and enter Macedonia either by Palanka or Djuma to campaign in the border highlands, with some professional brigand as leader, and retire again into Bulgaria. An evidence of the difference between the two classes is given by the greater success of the Turks against the politicians in the north than against the professionals in the south.

A band of the former character, dressed as Bulgarian soldiers and provided with Männlichers, dynamite bombs, medicines, manifestoes, and all the paraphernalia, was wiped out at Kochana, in Kossovo. The organs of the rival sections of the Central Committee mutually reproach each other for treachery in this affair. Mr. Fontana. Mr. Theodorides. "Reformi."

Another fight occurred at Pianetz, near Tsarevo-Selo, in which the Committee admits a loss of eight taken and several killed. "Grajhdanin." "Reformi."

A fight at Petrich is reported to have gone on all day with loss to the band, and caps such as those used in the Bulgarian army were found on the field. According to the Committee's version twelve Turks were killed, and the villagers retired with the band to avoid reprisals. Mr. Fontana. "Reformi."

Two bands of 16 and 24 men are reported in the Kaza of Demir-hissar, one of 24 in Petrich, one of 36 in Serres. Doncho and Zapro are reported to be with these. Mr. Theodorides.

Many other bands, it is believed, intended to profit by the withdrawal of troops stipulated for by Miss Stone's captors, and were baulked by the refusal of Ibrahim Pasha, commanding on the frontier, to admit this condition.

Numerous arrests are reported from Djuma in connection with the Stone case.

The long list of skirmishes shows an increased activity on the part of the Turks, who are reported to have put all the regular garrison (Nizam) in a condition to take the field. An innovation in the shape of a Turkish band is reported to have looted Yakoruda, a large Bulgar village. "Reformi." Sir A. Biliotti. "Reformi."

Programme of the Committee.

A few general considerations may be in place before closing this category.

There is a good deal of misunderstanding abroad as to the exact aims of the Central Committee. The Servian press seems to be under the impression that the annexation of Macedonia to Bulgaria is intended. In the Viennese papers and in the French "Revue du Droit Publique," it is stated that the object is an independent Republic. The project of reforms has lately been published by the Committee, and a translation from the Bulgarian, with notes in explanation, is herewith annexed. This scheme shows that the aims of the Committee are more moderate or, at all events, more methodical than represented. The autonomy provided would practically establish a second Eastern Roumelia, probably with the same result, after the Bulgar Administration had had time to absorb or eject the other elements. Such a process is facilitated by leaving Old Servia and Epirus outside the limits of the province, presumably as consolation prizes

respectively to Servia and Greece, and by excluding the intractable Pomaks of the Rhodope.

The twelve Articles are, in fact, drawn from the Constitution of Eastern Roumelia, as drawn up by the International Commission, and this, combined with the sanction given to the principle of reform by the XXIIIrd Article of the Berlin Treaty, constitutes a cleverly engineered claim to foreign support. It is needless to point out that this Constitution was intended for the almost exclusively Bulgar population of Eastern Roumelia. That such an Administration could keep order in its own territory is doubtful; still more so whether it could hold the Albanian border; and the eventual necessity of intervention by Bulgaria in the interests of order is, perhaps, not unforeseen.

Bulgars and Servians.

Mr. Fontana.

A strong bid is being made in the press for Servian support, which finds some response in a recent speech by the Servian Premier and some encouragement in the decline of Servian propaganda for want of funds. They still have 107 schools, with 2,912 pupils, in the Uskub Vilayet, as against 161 Bulgarian schools (or, in the Bulgarian official statistics, 165), with 7,036 pupils. The poor attendance at the Servian schools is due to admittance no longer being gratis. The compensation proposed to Servia in return for resigning her claim to this region, besides a free hand in Old Servia, is the suppression of the "Arnautchina" and the relief of the Servians there and elsewhere from Albanian persecution. How the Bulgar autonomous province is to do this is not quite clear, but this much can be said—that when in 1883–84 the "Arnautchina" became intolerable in Monastir Vilayet, Halil Rifaat, the late Grand Vizier, being sent as Vali to restore order, tried the experiment of providing the Bulgar villagers with arms; in a few months 180 Albanian heads had been brought in and order was restored.

Albania.

There are some indications of the beginning of a national movement in Albania. The Italian press notices a meeting to be held in Italy of leading Albanians—Moslem, Orthodox, and Catholic—to prepare a Memorial to the Sultan complaining of persecution by the surrounding races and claiming autonomy as the price of continued allegiance. An Albanian, Prince Aladro Kastriotis, a descendant of Skanderbeg, has issued a Proclamation from Italy calling on his countrymen to rise. Any ultimate prospect there may be of Albanian unity and independence has undoubtedly been decreased by the murder in his native town of Ipek of the Mollah Zekko, the only man who might have attempted to unite the three creeds and thirty odd clans of Albania into one polity. His friends and followers bore honourable witness to his popularity in a fight in which sixty were killed and which it took two battalions to stop.

Bulgarski Vyestnik.

Mr. Fontana.

Ipek Albanians also figure in an affair where rent was claimed by one of them for a house occupied by a railway official, and a threat was sent to blow up the line unless it was paid. The official has voluntarily evacuated the premises, and the matter has been referred to the Government.

Mr. Fontana.

Raids are reported from Ghilan, in Kossovo, from Prizrend, and Rasluk, at which latter place Dibra Albanians, going to collect the Bey of Dibra's dues, met by chance gendarmes collecting the Sultan's taxes. After a fight, the village, which is Bulgar, was looted; but three of the inhabitants succeeded in reporting the matter to the Russian Consulate at Uskub.

Mr. Fontana. "Reformi."

Mehmet Pasha, persisting in refusing a subordinate post at Mitrovitza, was lately offered a division in Magnesia. Refusing that also, he has been sent for to the Palace, it is supposed in order to induce him to undertake restoring Imperial authority at Dibra, and has left for Constantinople.

Mr. Fontana.

Ibrahim Hakki, Kaïmakam of Dibra, has been transferred to Djakova. Zia Pasha is to be Mutessarif of Prishtina. Hairi Pasha has been placed in general command at Salonica.

Inclosure 2 in No. 129.

Translation of Project for Macedonian Autonomy, as elaborated by the 2nd Regular Macedonian Congress, and published in the Organs of the Central Committee, with Explanatory Notes in Brackets.

Boundaries of Autonomous Province.

THE present Vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, and Uskub to form one vilayet, with the capital Salonica, and the following frontier:—

A line leaving the Servian frontier near Vranya, and following the north-west limits of Cazas of Pryeshov, of Kumanova, of Kachanik and Tetousk [*i.e.*, south-east along the crest of the Kara Dagh to the Black Drin on the Albanian border, thus excluding Prishtina, Prizrend, and Old Servia]. Thence up the Drin and along the western limits of the Cazas of Ochrida and Koritza to the Grammos [due south along the Albanian border]. Thence along the southern limits of the Cazas of Kastoria, Kailar, Vodena, and Veria [due east along the extreme southern limit of the Bulgarian race] to the Vistritza and along it to the Ægean. Thence the littoral, including the Chalcidic peninsula to the mouth of the Myesta or Karasu [on the border of Thrace], and up it to the confluence of the tributary on which Radibosh is situated, and along it to the Roumelian frontier [in a northerly direction, excluding the Rhodope and its Pomaks. This province would include, however, the Turkish districts north of Chalcidike, the promontory itself, which is purely Hellenic, the Hellenes, Hellenized Vlachs, and Bulgars of Monastir Vilayet, the Hellenes of Kavaila and the littoral, and the Servians and Albanians of Uskub. It is claimed that this frontier is in accordance with the views of the Conference of Constantinople of 1876, Protocol II of the sitting of the 16th (28th) October, and with that of the Berlin Congress. ? Protocol XIII].

Administration.

2. A Vali to be appointed for five years, who shall belong to the dominant race [*i.e.*, Bulgar; *vide* Règlement Organique de la Bulgarie, Article 4, paragraphs 1–6].

3. The Vali to govern with the aid of an Assembly elected directly by the people, with proper guarantees for the rights of the minority, and endowed with full legislative authority. [*Cf.* Project of Constantinople, Conference of 1876, Article 1, paragraphs 1–17. The text is not clear as to whether it is the Vali or the Assembly that is to have "full authority;" but the point is, under the circumstances, of no great importance.]

Civil Rights.

4. The person and property of every citizen to be guaranteed him. There is to be no press censorship. [*Cf.* Project of Eastern Roumelian Commission, Chapter 1, paragraphs 4–11–15.]

Civil Service.

5. All officials to be of the dominant race [Bulgar]; the higher appointed by the Sultan and proposed by the Vali; the lower appointed by the Vali. [*Cf.* Constantinople Conference, Chapter 1, Article 21, and Chapter 16.]

Language.

6. The language of the dominant race to be on an equal footing with Turkish officially. [*Cf.* Constantinople Conference, Chapter 1, Article 22.]

Education.

7. Education of the Christian population to be left entirely to the care of the respective educational organizations. [This concession to non-Bulgars is a safe one, for the present educational organizations of Hellene and Servian rest merely on political propaganda, which would be abandoned or abolished in case this scheme were enforced.] [*Cf.* Turkish Education Act of 1836.]

Police.

8. For the preservation of peace and order a Constabulary to be embodied, under the orders of the Vali, drawn from the race of each locality, and numerically proportionate to it at the ratio of 1 per cent. to the local male population. Officers to be appointed as other officials. [*Vide* Article 5.] [This is borrowed from Article 8, paragraph 3, of the Project of the Constantinople Conference.]

Finance.

9. The Budget and taxes to be fixed by the Assembly. Twenty-five per cent. to be paid into the Imperial Treasury and the balance expended exclusively in the province. [*Cf.* Constantinople Conference, Article 5, paragraph 11.]

Execution.

10. These reforms to be executed by a Special Commission *ad hoc*.

Amnesty.

11. A full amnesty to all political offenders, whether convicts or suspects. [*Cf.* Article 9, Constantinople Conference.]

Adrianople.

12. This scheme to be also applied to the Vilayet of Adrianople. [*Vide* Article XXIII of Berlin Treaty.]

No. 130.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 10.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, March* 5, 1902.

I CALLED yesterday on Count Goluchowski, with whom I had not had an interview for some time.

I found that his Excellency had not yet received any report from Baron Calice, who had only returned this week to Constantinople, but he now seemed disposed to regard the situation in the Balkan Peninsula as no more immediately threatening than it had been on many other previous occasions at this time of year. It was, of course, possible that the fire might break out at any moment, but he did not attach importance to the warnings received that a rising would be attempted either this month or next. He had generally noticed that risings announced beforehand seldom amounted to much.

I asked whether he attached any weight to the attempt on the Servian frontier made two days previously by Alavantic, and whether he supposed it might have any connection with the bringing on of a general state of disorder on the Balkans, which the Macedonian conspirators were reported to intend.

His Excellency replied that he considered Alavantic's attempt to be merely the act of a crazy adventurer, and, therefore, without any special importance; but it was always difficult to foresee what might, or might not, happen at any time in Servia.

The Vienna papers have published the letter, translation of which is inclosed, declaring that Alavantic is neither a relative nor a partisan of Prince Peter Karageorgievitch.

Inclosure in No. 130.

Extract from the "Neue Freie Presse" of March 8, 1902.

[To the Editor.]

Dear Sir,

AS one of the nearest relations of Prince Peter Karageorgievitch, I beg you to publish the following correction of the reports which have appeared in the newspapers on the subject of Alavantic's revolutionary attempt:—

Alavantic is no relation of Prince Peter Karageorgievitch, nor had the Prince anything to do with him. Therefore, all reports which associate the name of Prince Peter Karageorgievitch with Alavantic's attempt are absolutely untrue.

(Signed) DR. JASCHEV M. NENADOVITCH.

No. 131.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Plunkett.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1902.

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador asked me, unofficially, to-day, whether I could tell him what action His Majesty's Government were likely to take in view of the possibility of disturbances in Macedonia, to which the attention of the Powers had been specially directed by the Greek Government.

I told his Excellency that I had already been in correspondence with our Ambassador at Constantinople upon this subject, and that I understood from him that his colleagues had not up to the present time been instructed to take any action.

I said that the Austro-Hungarian Government had exceptional opportunities of obtaining trustworthy information as to events in that part of the world, and that His Majesty's Government would be inclined to follow their lead. It seemed to me that the best course would be that the Ambassadors at Constantinople should consider the situation in consultation, and that they should then report to the Governments which they represented as to the best mode of preventing trouble from arising.

I thought it, however, of the utmost importance that any action taken by the Powers at Constantinople should be of the most cautious and tactful kind.

If we were to provoke the Porte into the adoption of violent measures of repression, the remedy might be worse than the disease.

I added that if the Austro-Hungarian Government thought that anything could be gained by representations at Sophia and Belgrade, we should be glad to associate ourselves with them in such representations.

His Excellency expressed his personal concurrence as to the action to be taken by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, and saw no objections to making representations at Sophia. He thought, however, that there was no reason for making such representations at Belgrade.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 132.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 13.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 4, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 1st instant, repeating to me a telegram of the day before from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica.

Sir A. Biliotti's information that the "Macedonian Committee" intend to cause massacres of Turks in the course of this month or next no doubt refers either to Sarafoff and other members of the old Committee, or to the local organization. Such massacres, with a view to provoking reprisals, form no part of the policy of M. Mikhailovsky and General Tsoncheff, the heads of the present Committee, although they have always been advocated by Sarafoff.

* Substance telegraphed.

With regard to the latter's alleged presence in Macedonia, I have the honour to state that I was told yesterday by M. Bracaloff, who was until a few days ago Bulgarian Agent at Belgrade, that about a fortnight ago he happened to be at the railway station at Belgrade, when his attention was called to two men whom his Secretary said he knew to be Boris Sarafoff and Davidoff, another of the late Committee, and who entered the westward-bound Orient express.

Being curious to know whether the Servian police knew of Sarafoff's presence at Belgrade, M. Bracaloff made inquiries and learnt that they were quite aware of it, and believed that he had been spending some days there endeavouring to create a Macedonian organization similar to that existing in Bulgaria, but that he had not been successful.

M. Bracaloff also found that the Russian Minister knew of Sarafoff's visit, but he did not discover how.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 133.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowme.—(Received March 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, March* 14, 1902.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant to Sir F. Plunkett, I have the honour to state that the Minister of Foreign Affairs informs me that the reports furnished him by the French Ambassador at Constantinople are to the effect that the unrest in Macedonia and the proportion of criminal acts are in excess of the normal standard; but no representations have been made to M. Delcassé on the subject on the part of the Austrian Government or any other Government.

M. Delcassé tells me that he thinks M. Constans would undoubtedly concert with his colleagues at Constantinople of his own accord as to the propriety of taking such action as that which your Lordship mentioned.

No. 134.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, March* 15, 1902.

MACEDONIA. With reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant to His Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, I learn that the attention of the Italian Government has been drawn by the Turkish Ambassador to the activity of the Macedonian Committees.

Instructions have accordingly been issued to the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Sophia to the effect that, in the event of his colleagues receiving similar instructions, he is to associate himself with them in representing the matter to the Bulgarian Government.

At Belgrade nothing has been done.

No. 135.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, March* 15, 1902.

IT is reported that serious disturbances have occurred among the Mahommedan population of Philiates.

The Government House was attacked by Albanians, and several gendarmes killed. It appears that until their arrears were paid the officers stopped the troops from leaving Janina.

No. 136.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, March* 15, 1902.

YOUR Lordship's telegram of the 12th March to His Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna.

As the present Bulgarian Government have shown every desire to discourage movements in Macedonia, representations to them seem to me uncalled for.

This morning the Minister for Foreign Affairs, while admitting the existence of bands in Macedonia, pointed out to me that the scene of their operations was in the interior, and that the frontier districts are quiet. In his opinion the principal danger is that the Turkish pursuit of these bands may be accompanied by the usual excesses committed upon innocent persons, whereby the population, already in a state of exasperation from misgovernment, may be driven to desperation.

He told me that the Government has recently caused several companions of the "voivode" Andonoff, referred to in my despatch of the 12th June last, to be arrested and interned.

I have repeated the above to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Vienna and Constantinople.

No. 137.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March* 15, 1902.

YESTERDAY the Turkish Ambassador read a Circular telegram from his Government which stated that, according to information received by them, the Revolutionary Committees in Macedonia had the intention of creating disturbances in that province, destroying the main roads in certain places, and provoking massacres with the object of raising discussions in the Bulgarian Sobranie and causing the Bulgarian Government to appeal to the European Powers.

The necessary precautionary measures had consequently been taken by the Turkish authorities, and all criminal attempts would be repressed at once.

Anthopoulo Pasha said that the Porte hoped that the Representatives of the Powers at Sophia would be instructed to let it be understood that no sympathy or countenance would be extended to such attempts.

I replied that the reports recently received by us in regard to the condition of Macedonia were such as to cause some anxiety, and that I was glad to learn that the Porte were alive to the danger which existed, and had taken precautions for the preservation of order in the disturbed parts.

I trusted that, in the event of trouble occurring and repressive measures becoming necessary, the Turkish Government would take great care to avoid indiscriminate or excessive severity, which would enlist sympathy in Europe against the Turkish authorities and on the side of the sufferers.

I added that you would receive authority to consult with the other Representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople as to whether it would be expedient to make any representations to the Bulgarian Government, and whether any suggestions could be usefully offered to the Turkish Government.

No. 138.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 17.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, March* 2, 1902.

I CALLED yesterday at the Foreign Department and inquired of Count Lützow whether the Greek Minister had lately addressed any communication to the Austro-Hungarian Government respecting the dangerous state of affairs in Macedonia, and, if so, what reply had Count Goluchowski made? I said the Greek Chargé d'Affaires in London had been instructed to inquire whether His Majesty's Government would be willing to join in representations at Constantinople, and also perhaps at Sophia. Your

Lordship understood that a similar communication was being addressed by the Greek Government to the Great Powers.

Count Lützow said that he was under the impression that no such communication had yet been made here by the Greek Minister. I then repeated to his Excellency the general substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 28th February.

His Excellency said that information to the same effect in regard to probable disturbances at some early date had reached the Austro-Hungarian Government, both from their Agents in the Balkan Peninsula and also from the Russian Government. He had little doubt that when the Greek Minister makes the similar communication here, Count Goluchowski would reply that Baron Calice, who left last night for Constantinople, had been instructed to furnish a report as soon as possible on the whole situation, and would put himself in touch with his colleagues.

Count Lützow, in the course of further conversation, said that the Austro-Hungarian Government would approve of the idea of joint action of the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

Count Lützow viewed the present state of things in the Balkan Peninsula as being decidedly more than usually disquieting, and he considered that the best means of combating the danger would be that the Ambassadors at Constantinople should consult freely together, and report to their Governments what course of action they can recommend.

Count Lützow said that we must not forget the danger that, if the Powers invite them to take effective measures for securing order in Macedonia and Albania, the Turks might go too far in the way of repression, and outrage the public opinion of the civilized world.

No. 139.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 17.)

My Lord, *Vienna, March* 13, 1902.

I TOOK advantage of yesterday's weekly reception at the Foreign Department to call on Count Goluchowski.

I found his Excellency had not yet received the detailed Report which he is expecting from Baron Calice, but he said the few lines he had received confirmed him in the opinion which he had previously expressed to me—that the rumours of impending risings in Macedonia had been exaggerated, and that there was little more than the usual state of unrest and disquiet common in those regions at this season of the year. Of course, said his Excellency, there is always danger of some sudden outbreak at any moment, but there seems no proof or probability that anything special is likely to happen immediately.

Count Goluchowski said he would be better able to appreciate the exact importance of all the different rumours afloat after he had received the Report which he expected shortly to get from Baron Calice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 140.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 17.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 9, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch reporting the murder of an Albanian notable, Mollah Zekko, and consequent disorders at Ipek.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, March* 3, 1902.

WITH reference to my telegrams to His Majesty's Ambassador of the 18th and 21st ultimo, reporting the murder of Mollah Zekko at Ipek and the consequent fighting in the town, I now have the honour to submit the following report, based upon information supplied to me by an ex-functionary, who was at the Ipek konak at the time of the murder and disturbance in question.

An Albanian Captain of Gendarmerie at Ipek, named Adem Zaïm Effendi, went on the 16th ultimo to the konak there to see the Hakim. Mollah (or Hadji) Zekko happened to be in the Hakim's room, and seems to have urged the latter to refuse a request made to him by Zaïm Effendi, who shortly afterwards left the konak. Mollah Zekko, whilst proceeding homewards with two of his followers, was suddenly met by Zaïm Effendi, accompanied by two Albanian "Mulazims," or Lieutenants, and three others, who seem to have been lying in wait together. Zaïm fired at Mollah Zekko several times, and the Mollah fell dead on the spot. The Mollah's two henchmen returned the fire, wounding Adem Zaïm in the body and one of his followers in the leg. One of the henchmen was shot down, and Zaïm and his friends made off and took refuge in his "kulé," or tower-house, within the town.

The news of the murder spread swiftly through Ipek, and the partisans of the murderer and of the murdered man flocked from all sides towards Adem Zaïm's tower. Meanwhile, a detachment of troops had been hurriedly dispatched by the Mutessarif to surround the tower and keep the Albanians at a distance.

The murder took place towards dusk, and by the time the troops had taken up their position it was dark. Hundreds of Albanians of Mollah Zekko's party encircled the troops and clamoured for Adem Zaïm to be delivered over to them. Zaïm's clansmen massed upon one side of the ring, ready, perhaps, to assist the troops should a rush be made upon the tower. In the darkness and confusion a shot was fired, another small detachment of troops came running from the barracks, and street fighting began between Albanians and soldiery. The darkness prevented any precise shooting, but, after the firing had ceased and Hadji Zekko's partisans had drawn off, twenty-eight dead and seriously wounded were found lying in the streets by the tower. Eight soldiers were killed. It is not known how many men were less seriously wounded or were carried off by their friends, though it is said that, in all, about sixty-four men were killed and wounded.

On the following morning Shemsi Pasha, who had been telegraphed for, reached Ipek from Prishtina with 800 "Suwari" (mounted infantry or cavalry) and some light guns, and a battalion arrived later from Mitrovitza. Shemsi Pasha then proceeded to form a ring with his troops so as to completely blockade the town and prevent ingress or egress. This ostensible object was to prevent Adem Zaïm from escaping from Ipek, but it seems that in reality he hesitated to enter the town through fear of provoking an attack from both factions, should he arrest and carry off Adem Zaïm in full daylight. The latter, nevertheless, had already declared his readiness to surrender to the authorities, who, however, feared to arrest him, and preferred to leave him where he was.

Towards midnight, some twelve hours after Shemsi Pasha's arrival at Ipek, the General swiftly and quietly entered the town with a strong band of mounted troops and a mountain-gun, and rode straight to Adem Zaïm's "kulé." Zaïm and his five companions at once surrendered, and were carried off out of the town before the news of his capture had time to circulate. Shemsi Pasha, with his prisoners and 800 cavalry, then started at a trot for Mitrovitza, the larger part of his force forming the rearguard. They reached Mitrovitza in the morning, and the following day Adem Zaïm, the two Mulazims, two elderly Albanians of the Khoja class, and a tattered civilian, described as a Bashi-Bazouk, reached Uskub. I saw them pass under escort from the station, Zaïm with the Khojas and Mulazims in carriages, and the Bashi-Bazouk, wounded in the leg and limping behind, in chains.

The troops from Mitrovitza remained at Ipek, where, however, no further disturbance occurred. The capture and departure of Zaïm Effendi and his companions were, no doubt, a relief to all parties. It is interesting to learn that the late Mollah Zekko's party at Ipek consisted of five "bayrak" (banners), each bayrak comprising from 700 to 1,000 houses. Reckoning each house to contain at least two males able to bear

arms, his party in its entirety would represent from 8,000 to 10,000 men, among whom many of the better class Albanians.

Adem Zaïm's faction consists of no less than seven bayrak, or from 11,000 to 14,000 men, but all of the lower and lowest classes. I am told, moreover, that the deceased's party outside Ipek was fairly numerous and powerful. Mollah Zekko and his relative, Adem Zaïm, were both sprung from the ranks, but the late Mollah enjoyed great influence even among Albanians of a better class through his reputation for fanaticism and an eccentricity which his admirers looked upon as inspired. He was over 70 years old at his death, and leaves no children. He is said to have been feared by the Sultan, in spite of the decorations showered upon him, as a suspected high priest of disaffection among the Moslem Albanians of Northern Albania. And he seems to have alternately played the Turkish patriot—as when he sent 1,000 Albanian volunteers to the Greco-Turkish war, who were all immediately sent back—and the propounder of autonomy, as he understood it, under his own spiritual, if not temporal, leadership.

A telegram, signed by Tahsin Bey, First Secretary at the Palace, was received by the Mutessarif of Ipek, peremptorily ordering the arrest of Adem Zaïm and his abettors, expressing the Sultan's regret for the death of Mollah Zekko, and stating that a monthly pension of £ T. 20 had been allotted to his widow by His Imperial Majesty.

I will endeavour to obtain and report further details as to the past of Hadji Zekko and Adem Zaïm, hitherto leaders of the two great factions at Ipek. The fact of those two factions being now deprived of their leaders can hardly fail to cause satisfaction at Constantinople.

Kiazim Pasha, Mutessarif and Commandant at Ipek, has now changed places with Salih Pasha, Mutessarif and Commandant at Dibra.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

P.S.—I have omitted to mention that in all probability serious blood feuds will continue as a result of Hadji Zekko's murder between members of his tribe, and others of Adem Zaïm's party.

R. A. F.

No. 141.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 17.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March 12, 1902.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant, I have the honour to state that at M. Daneff's last reception I told him of the information which had reached your Lordship as to the presence of Boris Sarafoff in Macedonia for the purpose of organizing massacres of Turks in order to provoke reprisals and bring about European intervention.

His Excellency said he had not heard this report, and did not believe it. He knew there were two or three revolutionary bands in Macedonia, none of them of recent formation, but that the people in general were disgusted with them, and would be heartily glad to be relieved of their presence.

I said I entirely believed it would be impossible to provoke an insurrection in Macedonia at present, but a massacre of a few Turks was another matter, and was always in the power of a handful of determined men to bring about. I asked him if he knew where Sarafoff is.

He replied that he had been lost sight of some months ago; that he was believed to have gone to Europe, and to be there still.

Ali Ferrouh Bey, the Ottoman Commissioner, to whom I spoke on the subject the same day, did not believe that Sarafoff would venture into Macedonia, the risk to his head being too great. He had similar information to that given me by M. Bracaloff, and reported in my despatch above referred to, as to Sarafoff's recent visit to Belgrade, except as regards the date of it, which he placed about ten days ago. Sarafoff, he said, had come to Belgrade from the West, and had summoned Davidoff from Sophia to help him in creating a Macedonian organization in Servia; failing in this they had left, Sarafoff returning to "Europe" and Davidoff to Sophia.

Ali Ferrouh Bey says that Macedonian bands are being formed here with the object of searching out Miss Stone's captors and relieving them of the ransom on the first opportunity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 142.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowwe.—(*Received March* 17.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, March* 13, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish Minister fully confirms the prevailing impression that an insurrection is being organized in Macedonia by Sarafoff and his adherents from among the old Macedonian Committee. He is aware that it is not countenanced by the new or central Macedonian Committee or by the Bulgarian Government, who are more or less amenable to the strongly-expressed representations of Russia and Austria, but he is doubtful whether, in the event of the brigands gaining a success, they would not meet with the covert support of the Central Committee, and even of the Bulgarian Government, who might not be able to restrain the movement. He did not, however, anticipate much difficulty from this source, as with a fifth Corps d'Armée the Turkish Government were quite able to annihilate ("anéantir") Sarafoff's bands; but he said they were not sufficiently numerous to guard the whole frontier, and there was always the danger of emissaries from Bulgaria or elsewhere inducing the frontier villages to rise, which might lead to bloodshed and to an outcry in Europe against massacres.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 143.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 18.)

My Lord, *Athens, March* 12, 1902.

M. ZAÏMIS was delighted to be able to confirm to me to-day what, on receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 6th instant I had first told him, viz., that Russia and Austria were making representations at Constantinople respecting the dangerous condition of part of Macedonia. He looks upon the action of Russia as invaluable in showing to the Slav agitators that no support is to be expected from her; and, indeed, his Excellency seems very hopeful now that for this year a serious outbreak will be averted.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 144.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, March* 19, 1902.

A NOTE dealing with the Macedonian question, founded on the Circular mentioned in your Lordship's telegram of the 15th instant to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, appears to have been addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Turkish Ambassador here.

M. Delcassé, however, did not communicate to me his reply. His Excellency informed me that the information given by Mr. Elliot to your Lordship in his telegram of the 15th instant entirely tallied with the reports which he had himself received from Sophia.

No. 145.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 19, 1902.

THE French Ambassador asked me to-day whether we had been approached on the subject of the apprehended disorders in Macedonia, and what action we were taking in the matter.

I informed his Excellency that we had received communications both from the Turkish and the Greek Governments, and that in our opinion the question was one which could best be discussed by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, by whose advice we should probably be guided. I also repeated to his Excellency the substance of my conversation with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador on the 12th instant, as recorded in my despatch to Sir F. Plunkett of that date.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 146.

Anthopoulo Pasha to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 22.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne, et, conformément aux instructions qu'il vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement, a l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de sa Seigneurie que les Comités Macédoniens se remuent en ce moment de plus en plus, et que tous leurs efforts tendent à provoquer dans ces provinces, par toutes sortes de manœuvres, à l'aide de méfaits perpétrés par leurs affiliés, une agitation et des massacres, afin d'émouvoir l'opinion publique en Europe et y amener ainsi une intervention de la part des Puissances en leur faveur.

Les autorités Ottomanes ont toujours fait preuve dans la répression de ces menées séditieuses de la plus grande modération ; mais en présence de la recrudescence de l'agitation, et afin de mieux déjouer les projets criminels des fauteurs de désordres, la Sublime Porte vient de transmettre aux Gouverneurs-Généraux des dites provinces Européennes les ordres les plus sévères à ce sujet.

Ainsi partout où des bandes d'agitateurs feront leur apparition, elles devront être poursuivies et dispersées avec la plus grande célérité, et les autorités Impériales devront veiller à ce que cette répression se fasse seulement par le moyen des troupes régulières et par la gendarmerie, sans que jamais et pour aucun motif la population ou des particuliers quelconques puissent y intervenir.

En un mot, le but principal poursuivi par les agitateurs Macédoniens étant d'exciter les Musulmans, par toutes sortes de provocations et de crimes, et en leur occasionnant de graves dommages, à la vengeance, les autorités devront tenir strictement la main à ce que ceux-ci ne se laissent entraîner à aucunes représailles, et à s'en remettre entièrement au Gouvernement Impérial du soin de les protéger et de sauvegarder leurs intérêts.

Anthopoulo Pacha croit devoir ajouter qu'il est autorisé par le Ministère Impérial d'assurer au Gouvernement Britannique que la Sublime Porte usera de la plus grande vigilance pour que ces instructions soient strictement observées par qui de droit.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 21 *Mars,* 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Ambassador presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and, in accordance with instructions which he has just received from his Government, has the honour to inform his Lordship that the Macedonian Committees are becoming more and more active, and that they are directing all their efforts to provoking by manœuvres of all kinds, and with the assistance of crimes committed by their partisans, an agitation and massacres in those provinces in order to gain the sympathy of the public in Europe, and to bring about the intervention of the Powers in their favour.

The Ottoman authorities have always shown the greatest moderation in dealing with these seditious designs; but in view of the recrudescence of the agitation, and in order the better to thwart the criminal projects of the promoters of disorder, the Sublime Porte has now sent to the Governors-General of the European provinces concerned the most stringent orders on the subject.

Thus, wherever bands of agitators appear they are to be pursued and dispersed without delay, and the Imperial authorities are to see that these measures of repression are carried out only by the regular troops and the gendarmerie, and that private persons do not intervene in any circumstances or on any pretext.

That is to say, that the principal object of the Macedonian agitators being to rouse the Mussulmans to acts of vengeance by all kinds of provocations and crimes and by doing them serious injury, the authorities are to take every precaution to prevent the Mussulmans from being tempted into acts of retaliation, instead of looking to the Imperial Government to protect them and to guard their interests.

Anthopoulo Pasha begs to add that he is authorized by the Imperial Ministry to assure the British Government that the Sublime Porte will take all possible care that these instructions are strictly observed.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
March 21, 1902.

No. 147.

Tewfik Pasha to Anthopoulo Pasha.—(*Communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, March* 22.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 22 *Mars,* 1902.

D'APRÈS les nouvelles informations qui nous proviennent, les officiers de l'armée de réserve de la principauté ont été informé qu'ils recevraient le 15 courant (v.s.) l'ordre de procéder à la mobilisation des réservistes, et les instructions nécessaires leur ont été données pour que cette mobilisation soit opérée dans l'espace de quarante-huit heures à partir de la réception du dit ordre.

En outre, les Anarchistes Bulgares font fabriquer des bombes à dynamite à Kustendil et à Dobnitza, et recrutent parmi les habitants de Djuma-i-Bala et de Petrich des affiliés pour renforcer les bandes de brigands qui doivent faire irruption dans ces parages. Un grand nombre de Bulgares habitant les villages de Pavoche, Lechka, Ligodache, Liche, et Dipotchintcha, dépendant du district de Djuma-i-Bala, se seraient même déjà ralliés aux brigands. De plus, les émissaires envoyés par ceux-ci auprès des habitants de Robova (Osmanié) ont, par l'entremise de ces derniers, transmis aux habitants des autres villages des instructions au sujet du mouvement organisé par les dits Comités, et ils ont procédé à la distribution des armes qu'ils ont réussi à introduire dans le Vilayet de Kossovo. Bien que les autorités Impériales ne cessent de prendre les dispositions nécessaires pour empêcher les menées de ces agitateurs et usent de la plus grande vigilance pour assurer le maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité dans ces parages, il serait néanmoins nécessaire de porter ce qui précède à la connaissance de M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, afin de faire auprès du Gouvernement Bulgare des représentations en vue de faire cesser les agissements des Comités susmentionnés, conformément à ma précédente communication.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, March* 22, 1902.

ACCORDING to fresh information which has reached us, the officers of the Reserve of the Principality have been informed that they will receive orders on the 15th instant (o.s.) to proceed to mobilize the Reserve, and they have received the necessary instructions with a view to the mobilization being carried out within forty-eight hours from the receipt of the orders referred to.

Further, the Bulgarian anarchists are having dynamite bombs manufactured at Kustendil and Dubnitza, and are enlisting men among the inhabitants of Djuma-i-Bala and Petrich to reinforce the bands of brigands who are to invade these districts. It is even said that a great number of Bulgarians inhabiting the villages of Pavosh, Leshka, Ligodash, Lish and Dipochincha, in the district of Djuma-i-Bala have already joined the brigands. Moreover, the emissaries sent by the brigands to the inhabitants of Robova (Osmanie) have, through these latter, sent to the

inhabitants of the other villages instructions in regard to the movement organized by the aforesaid Committees, and they have proceeded to distribute arms which they have succeeded in introducing into the Vilayet of Kossovo. Although the Imperial authorities continue to take the necessary steps to thwart the designs of these agitators, and are taking every precaution to insure the maintenance of order and tranquillity in these districts, it is desirable that you should communicate the above information to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and urge him to make representations to the Bulgarian Government with a view to their putting an end to the activity of the above-mentioned Committees, in accordance with my preceding communication.

No. 148.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 24.)

My Lord. *Constantinople, March* 15, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith to your Lordship a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub.

Mr. Fontana gives a detailed account of the state of turbulence and disorder prevailing in the northern portion of Macedonia, of the decaying authority of the central Government, of the precarious position of the Christian population, and of the uncertainty as to the future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 148.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

(Extract.) *Uskub, March* 8, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report as to the recent trend of events in the principal towns and districts of this vilayet:—

Prizrend.—Some seven years ago an Albanian army contractor at Prizrend, named Shakir Bey, was murdered, together with seven of his men, whilst attending the funeral of a friend at some distance from the town by a certain Rustem Kabash and his followers, of the village of Kabash in that neighbourhood. Rustem afterwards took to the mountains, but about two years ago he again made his appearance at Prizrend, and, having some money to dispose of, bought the right to collect the "ashaar" or dime in that caza.

As usual in such cases he oppressed and robbed the Christian villagers thereabouts, and last year a formal complaint against his extortion was laid before the Mutessarif. The Mutessarif reported the matter, together with the misdeeds of Rustem Kabash in the past. Orders were then received for Rustem to be arrested secretly, and at once sent to Constantinople, and those orders were carried out successfully some three months ago. Shortly afterwards Rustem's son, Ibrahim Kabash, collected a band of over 1,000 Albanians, raided cattle, and pillaged grain from the Christian villages in the caza in question, and then came with his band and his booty to Prizrend. The Albanians filled the Khans, and remained there until less than a fortnight ago, subsisting on the cattle and foodstuffs stolen from the villagers.

Ibraham Kabash, on his arrival at Prizrend, went to see the Mutessarif and demanded the release and return of his father, threatening to raid other villages as soon as the supply of provisions plundered by his men should be exhausted. The Mutessarif did his best to pacify him, and telegraphed to Constantinople for instructions. In reply, a letter bearing the seal of Rustem Kabash was forwarded to the Mutessarif for communication to Ibrahim, in which the father wrote that he had received £T. 100 from the Sultan and was going on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and urged his son to withdraw his men from Prizrend and live in peace. Ibrahim Kabash then retired with his band, swearing, however, to return and loot the town were his father not sent back to Prizrend in time for the festival of Kourban-Bairam. The market and shops at Prizrend remained unopened for two days or more, and the Christians

were afraid to leave their houses. The Albanians threatened the Mutessarif's life, and the whole town was in anxiety during the period of their stay.

Diacova.—About five weeks ago some Albanians of the party of Bairam-Zur, Colonel of Gendarmerie at Prishtina, killed one of the followers of Murteza Pasha, a wealthy Albanian contractor at Diacova, and the contractor or one of his men shot the murdurer.

Upwards of 2,000 Albanians of Bairam-Zur's and his friends following collected from various parts to wreak vengeance upon Murteza Pasha and his followers. They attacked the quarter where the Pasha resides, meaning to burn down his house. In the skirmishing between them and Murteza's Albanians seven men were killed, or fatally wounded, before the arrival of Shemsi Pasha with two battalions (one from Prizrend and the other from Mitrovitza) put a stop to the fighting, after three Albanians had been killed by the troops. Murteza Pasha was rescued, and Shemsi Pasha took him away to Prizrend, leaving the Mitrovitza battalion to keep order at Diacova.

Ipek.—Since the date of my last despatch I have no news from Ipek, but hear that the town continues in an unsettled condition. Bairam-Zur, the Colonel of Gendarmerie above alluded to, was at Uskub at the moment of Hadji Zekko's murder. He has now been sent to Ipek to use his influence on the side of order among the clansmen of the deceased, whose relative he was. I am told by Germans here that he was a "tressinaji" or trolleyman on the railway some five years ago.

The Kaïmakam of Goussinjé has been murdered by Albanians whilst on his way to Mitrovitza. It seems that he expelled an Albanian from Goussinjé not long since, and the Albanian or his followers killed the Kaïmakam out of revenge.

The road between Ipek and Mitrovitza was held by a strong band of Albanians last December under the lead of a certain Caraman (of the Ipek Caza, I believe). He and several of his followers demanded the grade of major, captain, &c., as a reward for their services. I hear that Caraman has now received the rank and pay of Major of Gendarmerie, and Aidin Aga, one of his fellow-brigands, that of Captain of Gendarmerie. They belong to tribes who adhered to the late Hadji Zekko. The Vali recommended, it seems, the bestowal of the commissions thus granted.

Yeni-Bazar.—In the Caza of Yeni-Bazar there is general discontent and disgust with Turkish rule. The majority of the Moslem population are of Bosniak origin, and these Moslems appear to be fiercer in their disaffection than even their Servian Rayah fellow-subjects. They seem to hate and despise the Sultan, whom they call corrupt and base. Four "Sarikli" or Khojas lead and foster the public hatred of the Palace—if not of Turkish—rule, all of whom bear the pseudonym of "Hafuz." They encourage the people to refuse payment of school and road taxes, declaring that the schools are useless and that no real roads exist. An Iradé from the Sultan ordered, not long ago, the levy of the said taxes in the Yeni-Bazar district. The four Khojas thereupon went to the konak and made the Kaïmakam sign a paper (under pain of death I am told), setting forth the reasons for which such taxes should not be levied.

The people refuse to apply to the Kaïmakam for assistance, or to acknowledge his authority, and look upon the Khojas as their real advisers and directors. Disaffection seems more or less general, in fact, throughout the Sandjak of Sienitza—until lately styled Novi-Bazar. My Russian colleague, who is usually accurately informed, tells me that the soldiery at Sienitza plundered the military stores there five or six months ago through discontent at receiving no pay and inferior rations.

Prishtina.—In the town itself deeds of violence seem perpetual among the Albanians. One or more are killed daily in feud or quarrel in the market or elsewhere in the town. Fifty-eight Albanians were killed in a party feud not many weeks since in the Prishtina Caza. The Servians at Prishtina are sullen and resentful; they are armed and, it is said, organized for an eventual revolt, and they seem to be awaiting the signal for vigorous action. Their Consul, I am told, bears himself with more courage and energy than discretion in his relations with the authorities. It is sincerely to be hoped, in the interest of the Prishtina Servians, that they will refrain from violence at the present moment, as they would quickly be crushed by the Albanians should they give way to more than bravado. It is feared, however, that they may any day yield to indiscretion, and create trouble of which they themselves will bear the brunt.

Uskub.—At Uskub there is nothing which calls for much comment at the present time. There are a number of Bulgarians in the local prison, and no class of the inhabitants appears content with the order of things. Two or three evenings ago

firing broke out in the Moslem "Muhajir" quarter of the town, and ran along as far as the main bridge crossing the border. Word was sent by the Vali to the Consulates that there was nothing to create alarm, and that the people had fired thinking that a fire had broken out—the invariable custom in these parts. It is rumoured, however, that the shots were fired as a demonstration against the Vali, the payment of taxes for road repairs which are never executed, and the increase in the number of police, who are to be reinforced by eighty men. I have not been able to ascertain for certain whether this was the case or no, and the authorities deny it. In any case, the demonstration, if demonstration there were, was made by the Moslems, the Christians holding aloof. A woman was killed by accident and a stray shot, and four men have been imprisoned.

At about the date of my return to Uskub in November of last year, Agob and Ismaïl Pashas, contractors for the supply of military clothing and provisions in this sandjak, refused to furnish further supplies pending settlement of a claim for £ T. 25,000 preferred by them against the Imperial Government. The Vali then received word from Constantinople that the Government would provide sufficient money to cover military expenditure up to the month of April next, and that the Uskub authorities should take into their own hands, and under their own responsibility, the task of furnishing to the troops all that was requisite up to that date. £ T. 14,000 were received for the purpose at the end of November, and considerable economy has been realized in comparison with former expenditure under the auspices of the two Pashas.

Anxiety is felt as to what the spring or early summer may witness in the tract of country bordering the Bulgarian frontier. I am inclined to believe that the situation thereabouts is more critical now than it has been since my nomination to Uskub nearly three years ago. Elsewhere in the vilayet Albanians, Servians, Bulgarians, and Turks seem to be alike on the watch, waiting for the solution of questions in which the last take, I believe, very little real interest. Their idea seems to be that the country is passing from their hands. Mutessarifs and Kaïmakams seem but puppets made to change or exchange places as soon as Albanian disapproval or violence call for another conductor of the farce of Local Government. An Albanian, apparently, need only collect followers and make himself a nuisance to obtain rank or decorations, though no Moslem Albanian community is allowed to open an Albanian school even at that community's expense. Yet the Albanians see with resentment—not unmixed, perhaps, with contempt—the progress of Bulgarian and Servian schools throughout the vilayet, and are well aware of the anti-Turkish and so-called patriotic tenets inculcated in those establishments.

There can be little doubt that the Albanians in these regions do more harm to each other than to any one else; far more Albanian blood than Christian blood is shed by Albanians, and more injustice is done by Albanian to Albanian than by Albanian to Christian. And although in Europe both the Servian and Bulgarian causes meet with sympathy and some support by one or other of the Powers no voice is raised on behalf of the Albanians, a brave people, and capable of enthusiasm without fanaticism, emanating, perhaps, from the fierce pride they cherish in their past. But they have practically no education and no intelligent leaders, and the present paralyzing rule tends to corrupt them and drag them ever lower.

No. 149.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 24.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 17, 1902.

THE British Acting Vice-Consul at Janina reports by telegraph the occurrence of serious disturbances at Philiates, a town in the mountainous region to the west of the capital of the vilayet.

Mr. Millelire states that public indignation had been aroused by the arrest of a Mussulman priest named Husni Hodja.

On the 12th instant seditious placards appeared on the walls in the town, calling on the populace to rise against the Governor-General: The same day 200 Albanians attacked the Government buildings, and in the fighting which took place between them and the gendarmerie Lieutenant Samy Bey was mortally wounded, and three gendarmes were killed and three injured; a force of regular troops, under the command of a Major, has been sent from Janina to Philiates.

It would appear also that the authorities cannot feel entirely sure of the regular troops in the town, for the junior officers have told the Military Commandant that, so long as their men are without pay or uniforms, they cannot answer for them.

Mr. Millelire states that the excitement among the Mussulman population is spreading.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 150.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 24.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, March 19, 1902.*

TALKING to the Minister of War yesterday, Ali Riza Pasha informed Mr. Block that he was about largely to increase the military forces in Macedonia. His Excellency said that at the present moment there were 7 divisions, each of 17 battalions; the battalions had, on the average, 500 men; these would be increased to 800, for whom everything was in store on the spot, thus raising the regular military forces from 59,500 to 95,000. Besides this increase he was calling out 2 divisions of "Ilave" battalions, 16 battalions to the division, each battalion being about 600 men, equal to 19,200 men. One brigade of 8 battalions was being called out in the Adrianople district, and would be distributed at Kirdjah and Kirk Kilessi, amounting to about 4,800 men.

No. 151.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 24.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, March 15, 1902.*

THIS morning I asked M. Daneff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, whether he had any news of Macedonia.

His Excellency replied that for some days he had heard of little else; telegrams came to him from St. Petersburgh, Cettinje, and other places describing the uneasiness that was felt about some movement which was apparently expected to originate at Sophia, and the Ottoman Commissioner had even been instructed to ask whether it was true that the Bulgarian reserves were being mobilized. With regard to the latter point, the report was, of course, absurd; all that was happening was that the recruits of the year were now being called up: this usually took place in January, but had been delayed two months this year from motives of economy.

With regard to the question of encouragement from here to a movement in Macedonia, the Government had not relaxed its vigilance—the frontier was carefully watched, and no bands had been able to cross. Individuals had crossed no doubt; indeed, he knew that some emissaries of the Macedonian Committee had done so, but the counsels of the present Committee were those of moderation.

As for Sarafoff, his influence was always overrated, and, such as it was, it had much diminished.

I told his Excellency that, although uneasiness certainly prevailed in the "Chancelleries" of Europe on the subject of Macedonia, I did not gather that any of it was attributed to the attitude of the Bulgarian Government. I said that what he had just told me confirmed my own impressions, except as regards Sarafoff, to whom I was surprised to find him assigning so little importance. Was it not the fact that Sarafoff had many adherents in the frontier towns?

M. Daneff denied it, except in the district of Chépélaré; and there the Government had recently caused several companions of the "Voïvode" Andonoff (whose arrest and escape formed the subject of my despatches of the 14th May and of the 12th June, 1901) to be arrested and interned, and they hoped to be able to lay hands on Andonoff himself.

His Excellency drew my attention to the fact that the frontier districts of Macedonia were perfectly quiet, and that the operations of the brigand or patriot bands were confined to localities in the interior, such as the neighbourhood of

Strumnitza and places in the Vilayet of Monastir. In his opinion, the real danger was lest, in the pursuit of these bands, the Turkish troops and the Bashi-Bazouks, who, it appeared, were already being employed, should commit the usual excesses upon villages of innocent persons, and should thereby drive to desperation the population already exasperated by oppression and misgovernment.

In subsequent conversation with Ali Ferruh Bey, the Ottoman Commissioner, who told me that the authorities in Macedonia were perfectly prepared to deal with any insurrectionary movement, and only wished that insurgent bands would cross the frontier in numbers, so that they might be promptly exterminated, I said that it was very satisfactory that the authorities were prepared, but that the important thing was that they should be very careful to see that they pursued and punished only the right persons.

I told him what M. Daneff had said to me about Sarafoff's influence, and he agreed with me that his Excellency under-estimated it.

P.S. *March* 17.—I find confirmation of M. Daneff's statement, as to the dispatch by the Macedonian Committee of emissaries to discourage violence, in the Sophia Macedonian paper "Delo," which laments the adoption of this policy. It gives the name of the principal emissary as Stoyanoff.

No. 152.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 24.)

My Lord, *Athens, March 17, 1902.*

M. ZAÏMIS informed me to-day that he learns from the Greek Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin that His Majesty's Government has taken the initiative in proposing that the Ambassadors at Constantinople should consult as to a representation to the Porte, and whether the Government at Sophia should also be addressed on the subject of the threatened troubles in Macedonia.

He was truly glad of this in the interest of peace and order, and had already heard from Sophia that the agitators were to some extent discredited.

When he spoke to me on the 12th he had received a telegram from St. Petersburgh reporting the determination of the Russian and Austrian Governments to take steps at Constantinople and Sophia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 153.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, March 24, 1902.*

A TELEGRAM from the Porte has been communicated to me by the Turkish Embassy which states that information has been received by the Ottoman Government that the Bulgarian Reserve will receive orders for mobilization on the 28th instant. The mobilization is to be carried out within forty-eight hours.

The telegram further states that Bulgarian Anarchists are engaged in the manufacture of dynamite bombs at Dubnitza and Kustendil, and that recruits are being obtained at Petrich and Djuma-i-Bala for bands of brigands who are to make raids, and who have already been joined by villagers from Leshka, Dipochincha, Ligodash, and Pavosh.

Instructions are also stated to have been issued through the inhabitants of Robova for organized movements, and that arms for distribution have been introduced into the Vilayet of Kossovo.

It is requested by the Porte that representations may be made to the Bulgarian Government to restrain the action of the Committees.

I request that you will report to me any information you have obtained in regard to these statements.

You should repeat your telegram to Sir N. O'Conor.

No. 154.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, March* 25, 1902.

YOUR Lordship's telegram of yesterday.

Reported intention to mobilize the Bulgarian Reserves (see my despatch of the 15th instant). The Ottoman Commissioner contradicted the report ten days ago.

Acting upon information supplied by him, the Bulgarian Government have seized 80 kilog. of dynamite at Kustendil.

The places named as recruiting centres for brigand bands are in Turkish territory.

The Ottoman Commissioner tells me that a few days ago a band was defeated near Leshka, and that stragglers from it have found their way into Bulgaria.

He does not know of any unusual introduction of arms into Macedonia; it is always going on. He says that the effect of the influx of American money is apparent.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Philippopoli reports that Boris Sarafoff is believed to be in that town.

M. Daneff, the Prime Minister, leaves to-day for St. Petersburgh; he describes his journey as having no political or financial object. While doubting this, I think it probably has no connection with Macedonian affairs.

I have repeated the above to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

No. 155.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, March* 25, 1902.

MY preceding telegram of to-day.

Later advices do not confirm Sarafoff's presence at Philippopoli.

Constantinople informed.

No. 156.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, March* 25, 1902.

THE Russian Memorial Church and Seminary at Shipka are approaching completion, and preparations are beginning to be made for the ceremony of consecration and inauguration, which is to take place next August. The Bulgarian Government hope to secure the presence of the Grand Dukes Vladimir Alexandrovich and Alexander Mikhailovich, and they are rather put to it to know how to provide a military display worthy of the occasion, at a season of the year when, in the ordinary course, the men who have nearly finished their second year of service have been discharged. Indeed, said M. Daneff to me a few days ago, he would not be surprised if the fact that the Cabinet have been considering this matter had some share in producing the rumour of a mobilization of the Bulgarian reserves which was exciting the apprehensions of the Turkish Government.

No. 157.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 25, 1902.

UPON receiving last night your Lordship's telegram respecting a communication from the Porte with regard to the alleged impending mobilization of the Bulgarian reserves, and to various preparations for insurrectionary movements in Macedonia, I went at once to see the Ottoman Commissioner, Ali Ferruh Bey. He told me that he

had convinced himself there was no truth in the rumour of mobilization, and that he had telegraphed to that effect ten days ago. (I had reported M. Daneff's denial of the report at the same time, in my despatch of the 15th instant.)

With regard to the manufacture of dynamite bombs, he told me that the Bulgarian Government, acting upon information supplied by him, had recently seized 80 kilog. of dynamite at Kustendil.

With regard to the statement that recruits are being obtained at Djuma-i-Bala and Petrich for bands of brigands who are to make raids, and who have been joined by the inhabitants of certain villages, I remarked that the places named are in Turkish territory, and that it was hardly a matter for representations to the Bulgarian Government if they were used as recruiting centres. To this he agreed. He told me that he had just heard that near Leshko, one of the villages named, a conflict had recently taken place between troops and brigands, in which the latter had been worsted, some stragglers having afterwards made their way into Bulgaria. This has since been confirmed by the press.

Ali Ferruh Bey did not know of any unusual introduction of arms into Macedonia, which, he says, is always going on, chiefly through the medium of the notorious brothers Ivanoff. He said, however, that Sarafoff's agents had undoubtedly a greater command of money since the payment of Miss Stone's ransom.

In telegraphing the substance of the above to your Lordship, I added that Mr. McGregor had reported that Boris Sarafoff was believed to be at Philippopoli, but that later in the day I informed you that the report was not confirmed. Mr. McGregor's information, derived from the Turkish Representative, was to the effect that Sarafoff was to arrive from a village near Chepelare to attend a meeting of the Philippopoli Macedonian Society, a body which is not in sympathy with the Central Committee. Not only, however, was the meeting held without him, but it was declared that he is at Geneva.

My Italian and German colleagues have also received inquiries from their Governments as to the report of mobilization put about by the Porte, and have contradicted it.

If any further proof of its groundlessness be required than what has been already given, it may be found in the departure to-day for St. Petersburgh of M. Daneff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. His Excellency has made some mystery about this journey; but it is not likely to be connected with the affairs of Macedonia. Matters of more pressing interest for discussion between his Excellency and the Russian Government are the arrangements for Prince Ferdinand's visit to St. Petersburgh in May and for the Shipka celebration in August; the question of inducing the Russian Government to follow the lead of Austria-Hungary in concluding a Consular Convention; and the endeavour to obtain their support in the loan negotiations which M. Daneff is expected to commence at Paris immediately after his visit to St. Petersburgh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 158.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March* 26, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday, I have the honour to state that I communicated to Mr. McGregor at Philippopoli your Lordship's telegram of the 24th instant, and directed him to telegraph to me any information he might possess bearing upon it. The following is the substance of his reply, just received:—

"In reply to inquiries, the Turkish Representative here informed the Porte on the 18th instant that nothing is known at Philippopoli of an intention to mobilize the reserves on the 28th March. Reports of the recruiting now completed may have caused misapprehension; it is, moreover, said that a portion of the reserve may take part in the celebrations at Shipka in August.

"I am told that uniforms of Turkish pattern are being made near Chepelare, where the Macedonians are terrorizing the Pomaks.

"The Committee at Philippopoli, which is believed to be in constant communication with Chepelare, has held two secret meetings this week."

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 159.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 25, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Scutari, reporting that the Vali had gone to the confines of the Mirdite country with a battalion of infantry and three guns; that this force seems to have been insufficient, and that two more battalions have been sent for from Prisrend.

I took an opportunity to draw the attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the position of affairs in the Mirdite country, and I pointed out to his Excellency the impolicy of harsh or precipitate action against these people and the bad effect it would produce.

Tewfik Pasha thanked me for bringing the matter to his notice, and said he would mention it to the Grand Vizier.

Upon my waiting upon His Highness this afternoon he alluded to the subject, and told me that upon receipt of Tewfik Pasha's report of my conversation with him, he had sent instructions to the Vali of Scutari to be very careful not to take unnecessarily severe measures or to attempt to disturb the tribal Government and partial autonomy enjoyed by the Mirdite people.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Vice-Consul Prendergast to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Scutari, March* 8, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 7th instant the Governor-General suddenly left for the confines of the Mirdite country—a distance of two hours—with a battalion of infantry and three guns. His Excellency returned the same evening, but the troops entered the Mirdite territory and proceeded as far as Gumsika—four hours from here.

This morning the Vali again left to join the troops, and has not yet returned. It is vaguely reported that seven soldiers have been killed; medical stores have been sent for in haste this afternoon.

His Excellency has telegraphed to Prisrend for two more battalions, which have not yet arrived.

The tribes of Dibra and Matt, both mostly Mussulman, appear to be making common cause with the Mirdites. The Catholic tribe of Hotti, on the east side of the Lake of Scutari, have cut the telegraph wires; and it is this moment reported to me that the Kaïmakam of Gusinje, on the Montenegrin frontier, has been shot, though the truth of this is doubtful.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE W. Y. PRENDERGAST.

No. 160.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 25, 1902.

THE Hellenic Minister called on me yesterday, and left with me a Memorandum on the intolerable condition to which the action of the Bulgarian Committees has brought the inhabitants of Macedonia, and briefly stating a number of incidents to prove that they are seeking to terrorize the population.

I have the honour to inclose copy of this Memorandum, for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 160.

Memorandum.

LA situation vraiment intolérable que les Comités Bulgares parvinrent à créer pendant ces dernières années en Macédoine devient actuellement de plus en plus odieuse et menaçante. Des bandes Bulgares nombreuses organisées et équipées en Bulgarie et Roumélie-Orientale pénètrent dans cette province Ottomane et y sèment la terreur en y commettant des crimes atroces contre tous les citoyens paisibles, qu'elles considèrent comme un obstacle à leurs visées criminelles et subversives.

Les viols et les pillages, les meurtres et les assassinats, directement inspirés par les agents du Comité Bulgare en Macédoine, restés jusqu'à présent presque toujours impunis, augmentent de jour en jour. Il serait difficile, si non impossible, de citer tout au long tous les notables Musulmans assassinés par les membres du Comité; l'assassinat du Dr. Kyvernides à Guevguéli, l'attentat contre le Dr. Sakéllarios à Goumentza, le meurtre de plusieurs prêtres Grecs, surtout dans le district de Monastir, sont également suffisamment récents pour qu'ils aient besoin d'être expliqués. Mais il n'est pas inutile de donner ici une liste succincte de certains crimes commis tout dernièrement pour qu'on puisse se faire une idée du désordre et de la terreur qui dominent dans les provinces Macédoniennes. La malaise et la terreur dont souffre la Macédoine deviennent de plus en plus graves et menacent de créer un péril qu'on ne saurait prévenir qu'en combattant le mal par des moyens rigoureuses, prompts, et efficaces :—

1. Le Major Mouktar Aga, ayant comme guide un indigène nommé Traïkos, s'est rendu, il y a trois mois, à la tête d'un détachement, à Conoblatti (Caza de Castorie), centre d'action important du Comité. Le soir même de son arrivée à la dite localité les agents du Comité, afin d'inspirer la terreur parmi les Chrétiens, massacrèrent le père du susdit Traïkos à Roulia, sise à quelques heures loin de la localité précitée. Mouktar Aga alla le lendemain à Roulia pour découvrir l'assassin, mais dès qu'il eût quitté le village, sans obtenir, du reste, un résultat quelconque, les assassins massacrèrent sur les lieux trois femmes dont l'une seule portait soixante-dix blessures.

Peu de temps après les mêmes agents attaquèrent en plein jour et au milieu du marché de Kaszieh (Castorie) le susnommé Traïkos, qu'ils tuèrent à coups de revolver. Ces faits constituent un des procédés habituels, au moyen desquels le Comité impose ses volontés, règle les différends qui pourraient exister entre deux villages, s'empare des écoles, punit les prêtres, vole, pille, et gouverne à son gré.

2. Le 29 Janvier dernier (v. s.) quinze membres du Comité, armés, ayant à leur tête le renommé chef de bande Pétroff et le fugitif Professeur Chrouposti Cronzos entrèrent dans le village Cholista, rassemblèrent de force les habitants et les menaçant de mort, les forcèrent à jurer qu'ils laisseraient les quelques Bulgares Schismatiques officier dans l'église Grecque Orthodoxe. La terreur aidant, l'incident fut resté inconnu : ce n'est que plus tard que le prêtre Grec du village communiqua le fait à titre confidentiel à son autorité ecclésiastique.

3. La même histoire s'est renouvelée au village Aposképo, sis à une demi-heure loin de Kesrieh.

4. Dans le village Corténetzi les membres du Comité forcèrent à main armée les habitants à leur donner l'argent de l'église Grecque pour les besoins du Comité Bulgare.

5. Le Comité Bulgare depuis bien longtemps a déclaré ouvertement la guerre contre les prêtres et les professeurs Grecs Orthodoxes de la Province de Kesrieh en les forçant par des menaces de mort à abandonner leurs places ou à embrasser le schisme. C'est ainsi qu'à Zomanitza les agents du Comité donnèrent un délai de vingt jours au prêtre Grec du village et au Professeur Argyri pour abandonner leurs postes; ils les menacèrent de mort dans le cas où ils dénonceraient aux autorités locales cette décision du Comité Suprême. Le prêtre du village fut ainsi forcé de quitter le pays.

6. A Scambressi, il y a quelques jours, les membres du Comité renvoyèrent arbitrairement le prêtre Grec Orthodoxe.

7. A Podjivisti, le professeur Grec, Papa Hélias, ayant continué dans l'école Grecque ses leçons, malgré les ordres qui lui ont été donnés par le Comité Bulgare, fut invité sous peine de mort de se démettre de ses fonctions dans un délai de vingt jours.

8. A Conoblatti, le prêtre Grec Orthodoxe, qui est en même temps professeur, a été forcé de même à abandonner sa place et à quitter le pays.

9. A Aposképo, les partisans du Comité Bulgare intimèrent aux habitants Grecs l'ordre d'envoyer dorénavant leurs enfants à l'école Bulgare, les menaçant de mort en cas de désobéissance; c'est ainsi que le nommé Zissi s'est vu contraint de partir pour ne pas se soumettre aux ordres tyranniques du Comité.

10. A Zagoritzani, l'inspecteur ecclésiastique et aussi prédicateur Orthodoxe Hélias, fut attaqué le 1er Janvier dernier (v.s.) en plein jour par les membres du Comité; il parvient pourtant à s'enfuir et se sauver la nuit dans un autre village Musulman, où il reçut l'hospitalité et put passer la nuit. Il dénonça le lendemain le fait à l'autorité locale, et, craignant la vengeance des bandes, partit pour la Thessalie.

11. Au mois de Janvier, année courante, le Métropolitain Grec de Castorie (Kesrieh) fit sa tournée habituelle dans les villages du district de Kourestia, où siègent de préférence les chefs des bandes du Comité. Informées de ce fait, les bandes se mirent à parcourir les villages et à contraindre les habitants par tous les moyens possibles à se refuser de recevoir leur Métropolitain. Le Prélat a dû continuer sa tournée, escortée par un nombre suffisant de soldats, mais toujours sous le coup des menâces du Comité. Il trouva partout les habitants fidèles à leur foi et à leur nationalité Grecque, mais consternés et épuisés par les pillages et les souffrances endurés. Il est inutile ici de parler des églises Grecques que le Métropolitain trouva occupées de force par les schismatiques, avec le concours des bandes du Comité Bulgare. Ce qui est attristant, et digne sous tous les points de vue d'attirer l'attention sérieuse de qui de droit, c'est que dans plusieurs localités les autorités Ottomanes, terrifiées elles-mêmes ou bien corrompues par le Comité, ont été jusqu'à soutenir les organes du Comité dans la perpétration de leurs crimes et même à soustraire les coupables à l'action de la justice. L'élargissement, il y a deux mois, de trente-trois criminels Bulgares, détenus, a enhardi davantage les partisans du Comité et a contribué à aggraver considérablement la situation.

12. Le 4 (17) Février dernier, quatre agents du Comité ont poignardé le Professeur Tzorbeff, habitant le village Mantzovinista (près de Perlépé) pour avoir osé critiquer et désapprouver dans ses entretiens avec les villageois la conduite du Comité et de ses partisans.

13. Dans le village Sistovo, du district de Kesrieh, une bande de quatorze membres du Comité réfugié dans une maison de l'institutrice Bulgare, fut bloquée le 11 Février, année courante, par un détachement militaire. Les rebelles ayant tenté une sortie, un engagement a eu lieu, à la suite duquel deux soldats, quatre hommes de la bande, l'institutrice elle-même ont été tués. Cette dernière avait encore en main son revolver. La plupart des habitants du village prirent la fuite avec les restes de la bande; les autres furent tous arrêtés et emprisonnés.

14. A Doïran (district de Salonique) le Directeur de l'école Grecque et le Professeur Joannidès furent attaqués à coups de pierres le 18 Février, année courante, en plein jour, au milieu du marché, par les professeurs et les élèves de l'école Bulgare secondés par un certain nombre des partisans du Comité. Les professeurs Grecs parvinrent à se sauver des mains de leurs persécuteurs et affolés se réfugièrent dans un magasin tenu par un sujet Hellène; néanmoins, la populace effrénée continua pendant des heures entières à manifester et à crier que le jour de vengeance était proche.

Des scènes analogues eurent récemment lieu dans plusieurs autres localités dépendant de Salonique contrairement à la tranquillité relative qui y régnait jusqu'ici. Les populations Musulmanes et surtout celles du district de Kesrieh (Castorie) se trouvent sous l'empire d'une excitation d'esprit de plus en plus croissante. Les Turcs, voyant qu'en dehors des bandes régulièrement organisées, telles que celles des Chefs Markoff et Pétroff, les villageois Bulgares forment chaque jour des bandes locales passagères pour forcer leurs voisins à embrasser leurs idées subversives et commencent à former à leur tour des bandes de défense dont les plus connues sont actuellement celles de Resna et de Perlépé. A Monastir plusieurs Musulmans, réunis sous la présidence d'un certain Youssouf Effendi, sont en train de former des bandes de défense analogues. Les faits qui précèdent suffiront, semble-t-il, à donner une idée du désordre et de l'anarchie qui règnent actuellement en Macédoine et à prouver que le danger d'un mouvement plus considérable est imminent si l'on ne prend pas à temps des mesures rigoureuses et efficaces.

Le 4 (17) *Mars*, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE really intolerable situation which the Bulgarian Committees have succeeded in creating in Macedonia during the last few years is now becoming more and more

odious and threatening. Numerous Bulgarian bands, organized and equipped in Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, enter this Ottoman province and spread terror there, committing atrocious crimes against all peaceable citizens, whom they consider an obstacle to their criminal and subversive designs.

Rapes and robberies, murders and assassinations, directly inspired by the agents of the Bulgarian Committee in Macedonia, who so far have remained nearly always unpunished, are becoming more frequent every day. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to give a complete list of all the Mussulman notables who have been assassinated by the members of the Committee: the assassination of Dr. Kyvernides at Ghevgheli, the attempt on the life of Dr. Sakellarios, of Gumentza, and the murder of a number of Greek priests, especially in the district of Monastir, are sufficiently recent occurrences to require explanation. But it will be useful to give here a short account of certain crimes committed quite recently, in order to give an idea of the disorder and terror reigning in the Macedonian provinces. The uneasiness and terror from which Macedonia is suffering are becoming more and more serious, and threaten to create a danger which can only be met by taking vigorous, prompt, and effective measures to combat the evil:—

1. Major Mukhtar Aga, taking with him as a guide a native named Traïkos, went three months ago, at the head of a detachment, to Conoblatti (Caza of Castoria), an important centre of action of the Committee. On the evening of his arrival at the place mentioned, the agents of the Committee, in order to frighten the Christians, killed the father of the above-named Traïkos, at Roulia, a place a few hours distant from the locality mentioned. Mukhtar Aga went to Roulia the next day to try to discover the murderer, but as soon as he had left the village (without ascertaining anything) the murderers killed on the spot three women, one of whom was found to have seventy wounds.

Soon afterwards the same agents attacked, in broad daylight, in the middle of the market, at Kaszieh (Castoria), the above-mentioned Traïkos, killing him with revolver shots. These acts are an example of the usual proceedings of the Committee, and by such means it obtains the execution of its orders, settles any disputes that may arise between two villages, gets possession of the schools, punishes the priests—robs, plunders, and rules as it thinks fit.

2. On the 29th January last (o.s.) fifteen armed members of the Committee, with the notorious leader Petroff and the fugitive Professor Chrouposti Cronzos at their head, entered the village of Cholista, forced the inhabitants to assemble, and, threatening them with death, compelled them to swear that they would allow the schismatic Bulgarians—of whom there were only a few—to hold services in the Greek Orthodox church. In consequence of the terror inspired by these proceedings the incident did not become known; later, however, the Greek priest of the village informed his ecclesiastical superior, confidentially, of what had occurred.

3. The same thing happened at the village of Aposkepo, half an hour from Kesrieh.

4. In the village of Cortenetzi the members of the Committee, with arms in their hands, forced the inhabitants to give them the money of the Greek church for the use of the Bulgarian Committee.

5. The Bulgarian Committee long ago declared war openly against the Greek Orthodox priests and professors of the province of Kesrieh, forcing them by threats of death to give up their places or to join the schism. Thus, at Zomanitza, the agents of the Committee ordered the Greek priest of the village and Professor Argyri to give up their places within twenty days; they threatened to kill them if they informed the local authorities of this decision of the Supreme Committee. The priest of the village was thus compelled to leave the country.

6. At Scambressi the members of the Committee, a few days ago, arbitrarily dismissed the Greek Orthodox priest.

7. At Podjivisti the Greek Professor Papa Helias, having continued to give lessons in the Greek school, in spite of the orders of the Bulgarian Committee, was informed that he would be killed if he did not resign his appointment within twenty days.

8. At Conoblatti the Greek Orthodox priest, who is also a professor, was forced in the same way to give up his post and to leave the country.

9. At Aposkepo the partisans of the Bulgarian Committee ordered the Greek inhabitants to send their children to the Bulgarian school in future, threatening them with death in case of disobedience; a man named Zissi was thus forced to leave, in order to avoid submitting to the tyrannical orders of the Committee.

10. At Zagoritzani, Helias, an ecclesiastical inspector, and also Orthodox preacher, was attacked, on the 1st January last (o.s.), in broad daylight, by the members of the Committee; he succeeded in escaping, however, and took refuge after dark in a Mussulman village, where he was kindly received and was able to pass the night. He reported the occurrence to the local authorities the next day, and, fearing the vengeance of the bands, left for Thessaly.

11. In the month of January of the present year the Greek Metropolitan of Castoria (Kesrieh) made his usual round among the villages of the district of Kourestia, the favourite haunt of the leaders of the Committee bands. On hearing of this the bands began to go from village to village forcing the inhabitants by every possible means to refuse to receive their Metropolitan. The prelate had to continue his round with a strong escort of soldiers, and was constantly threatened by the Committee. He found the inhabitants everywhere true to their faith and to their Greek nationality, but in a state of consternation, and exhausted by the plundering and sufferings which they had endured. It is not necessary to give particulars here in regard to the Greek churches which the Metropolitan found occupied by force by the Schismatics, with the assistance of the bands of the Bulgarian Committee. It is a regrettable fact, for many reasons deserving serious attention in the proper quarter, that in several places the Ottoman authorities, being themselves intimidated or else corrupted by the Committee, have gone so far as to support the agents of the Committee in the commission of their crimes, and have even sheltered the guilty persons from the action of the law. The release from detention of thirty-three Bulgarian criminals two months ago has still more emboldened the partisans of the Committee, and has done much to aggravate the situation.

12. On the 4th (17th) of February last four agents of the Committee stabbed Professor Tzorbeff, residing at the village of Mantzovinista (near Perlepe) for having dared, in conversation with the villagers, to criticise and express disapproval of the conduct of the Committee and its partisans.

13. In the village of Sistovo, in the district of Kesrieh, a band of fourteen members of the Committee, who had taken refuge in the house of the Bulgarian school-mistress, were, on the 11th February last, surrounded by a military detachment. The rebels made a sortie, and an engagement took place in which two soldiers, four of the band, and the school-mistress were killed. The schoolmistress was killed with her revolver in her hand. Most of the inhabitants of the village took to flight with the surviving members of the band; the remainder were all arrested and imprisoned.

14. At Doïran (district of Salonica) on the 18th February last, the Director of the Greek school and Professor Joannides were attacked with stones in broad daylight in the middle of the market by the professors and pupils of the Bulgarian school, supported by a certain number of partisans of the Committee. The Greek professors succeeded in escaping from their persecutors, and mad with fear took refuge in a shop kept by a Greek subject; the frenzied populace, however, continued for hours demonstrating and crying out that the day of vengeance was near.

Similar scenes have recently occurred in various other places in the Salonica district, which had previously been quieter than other districts. The Mussulman population, especially that of the district of Kesrieh (Castoria) is becoming more and more excited. The Turks, seeing that, in addition to the regularly organized bands such as those of the Chiefs Markoff and Petroff, the Bulgarian villagers are every day forming temporary local bands to force their neighbours to adopt their subversive ideas, are beginning in their turn to form bands for defence, of which at present the best known are those at Resna and at Perlepe. At Monastir a number of Mussulmans, united under the leadership of a certain Yussuf Effendi, are forming bands of this kind for purposes of defence. The facts stated above should be sufficient to give an idea of the disorder and anarchy now prevailing in Macedonia, and to prove that there is imminent danger of a movement on a larger scale unless rigorous and effective measures are adopted in time.

March 4 (17), 1902.

No. 161.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 25, 1902.

I SPOKE to the Grand Vizier this afternoon about the calling out of the Ilavé or additional battalions reported to your Lordship in my despatch of the 19th instant. I said that there seemed to be considerable uneasiness lest these troops should not be under proper military control, and should give way to acts of inhumanity and wanton cruelty against the inoffensive Christian population in case they were attacked by the Bulgarian bands and employed in their suppression.

His Highness said that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had already reported the remarks I had made in this sense to his Excellency yesterday, and that he had again warned the Valis to be most careful not to allow any attacks upon the innocent population, no matter how great the provocation. In fact, he had strictly enjoined upon them the duty of preventing the Mussulman population from taking the law into their own hands, and had confidentially advised them that if any acts of cruelty or massacre were perpetrated by the Mussulmans, there would be an outcry in Europe which would be dangerous to the very existence of the Government and its rule throughout Macedonia. He had, moreover, told the Valis to advise and insist upon the Mussulmans abstaining from making any reprisals in case they were attacked by the Bulgarian bands, and leaving their punishment to the regular military authorities.

His Highness added that the present Vali of Salonica did not seem able to cope with the difficulties created by the Revolutionary Committees, and it had been decided to replace him by Hassan Fehmi Pasha, who was an officer of great intelligence, energy, and experience, whose appointment would inspire confidence among the law-abiding portion of the population, whether Christian or Mussulman, and at the same time deter the revolutionists from pushing matters to extreme lengths.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 162.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 25, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting the appearance of Bulgarian bands in the neighbourhood of Drama and of Salonica.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 162.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, March* 22, 1902.

MR. B. GREGORIADES, the Vice-Consul at Drama, who in January reported that all was perfectly quiet, has reported to me on the 18th instant that four Bulgarian brigands were seen in the Bulgarian village of Seridjova, in the Caza of Lihna, coming out of the Hodjabachi's house; that other Bulgarian brigands have written a threatening letter to a Greek named Coumbaki, a schoolmaster in the village of Eghridéré, and, in consequence, domiciliary visits having taken place, many Bulgarians have been inculpated, especially a Chief named Tsingueloff, of the village of Plevna, near Drama, who, together with his son, a schoolmaster at Monastir, were exciting Bulgarians to revolt. The elder Tsingueloff has been incarcerated in the military prison at Serres. Among the papers mentioned above there was one incriminating a Dr. Christovich and two Bulgarian merchants of Salonica, who were summoned to appear, and who appeared at Serres, but they were found not guilty by the Turkish Tribunal and released. The Bulgarians believe that the whole thing is a got-up intrigue on the part of some enemy of the persons in question.

The Vali and the Commander (Military) mentioned to me yesterday that a Bulgarian band of eleven was met two days previously by soldiers and gendarmes in the village of Motol, Caza of Kilkish, only an hour and a-quarter distant by rail from this town. Three of the band were killed, two wounded, and the remainder escaped. No mention was made of the losses on the other side.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 163.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 25, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub reporting that a band of Bulgarians, numbering sixteen, and armed with Männlicher rifles, has been captured in the vicinity of Palanka.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, March 19, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a band of sixteen Bulgarians, armed with Männlicher rifles, crossed the frontier from Bulgaria in the vicinity of Palanka two or three days ago. The authorities seemed to have had prescience of the projected raid, for they dispatched a strong force of zaptiehs, who succeeded in surrounding and surprising the band soon after its appearance on Turkish soil. The Bulgarians at first refused to surrender, but a volley poured in by the gendarmes killed four of their number, and the others then laid down their arms. The twelve prisoners were brought to Uskub yesterday evening, two pack horses carrying the rifles and ammunition captured from them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 164.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 31.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 25, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from M. Pissurica, Honorary Dragoman at Monastir, on the disturbance in that vilayet due to the action of the Bulgarian Committees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 164.

M. Pissurica to Sir A. Biliotti.

(Extrait.) *Monastir, le 3 Mars, 1902.*

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance ce qui suit :—

Le 24 Février, au village Sistevo, à une heure et demie de Castorie, une bande Bulgare composée de quatorze personnes, s'était installée dans la maison de l'institutrice Bulgare du village et invitait les villageois pour le catéchisme aux idées du Comité. Le Hukumet, avisé, s'est empressé de cerner l'endroit. Les bandits, s'étant aperçus de l'approche des soldats, essayèrent de se retirer du village sortant par une ouvérture secrète de la rétrofaçade de la maison. Il paraît que la bande était familière

du village. La retraite eut lieu naturellement au milieu d'une fusillade des deux côtés. Quatre Bulgares ont été tués et l'institutrice aussi (dont la main morte portait encore le revolver) ; deux soldats sont tombés de l'autre côté. La plupart des habitants du village ont quitté leurs toits et suivit la bande ; les restants ont été arrêtés. Il y a à noter maintenant que quand je dis "bande" il ne s'agit plus, comme toujours, des individus venus de Bulgarie et qui en ont formé quelques-unes en s'associant des gens du pays, comme la bande de Marco, Kotte, Milenco, &c., et circulant dans le village. A l'heure actuelle ce sont les habitants eux-mêmes de deux ou trois villages voisins qui forment les bandes en s'unissant en petites bandes et allant dans d'autres villages pour les catéchiser à la révolte, ou dans les villages du parti Grec pour les induire, par la persuasion ou par les menaces, à s'unir aux Bulgares. D'autrefois ils se mettent en guet-apens aux divers croisements des routes pour tuer les Turcs, avec lesquels ils ont des comptes ouverts. En ce moment, donc, on ne peut pas savoir combien de bandes il y a. Les villageois, se transformant journellement en bandits, augmentent, ce qui rend la position bien critique, surtout à l'égard des mesures probables de la part de la population Turque. A Resna (petite ville à cinq heures de Monastir), l'avant-dernière semaine, le nommé Tassi, commerçant du parti Grec, a été tué par erreur au lieu d'un autre Tassi, Bulgare des plus fanatiques. Sachant que le coup manqué du Comité Turc était destiné pour leur homme a eux en vengeance de trois Turcs Bektzis blessés par les Bulgares quelque temps avant, les Bulgares ont tiré en pleine rue de Resna contre le Vice-Président du Comité Turc ; la balle a atteint son bras ; des perquisitions suivirent en masse, et les autorités ont apporté ici une vingtaine de fusils Mannlicher et arrêté entre autres les trois maîtres d'école Bulgare de la dite ville.

Sur la route de Perlépé, Mardi passé, deux Turcs agas (petits rentiers) venant ici ont été tués par les Bulgares en guet-apens ; un Juif se trouvait aussi dans la voiture. A ses cris et larmes les agresseurs l'ont laissé et l'ont chargé en rentrant à Monastir d'informer le Vali que c'est le Comité Bulgare qui tue les mauvais Turcs. Le Juif est venu ici et avisé le Hukumet, mais certes n'a pu osé répéter au Vali mot à mot les paroles dont il a été chargé de la part des assassins. Ce cas ajouté aux divers autres faits récents qui arrivent de toute part du vilayet ont aussi excité les Turcs de notre ville, qui depuis quelques jours se réunissent pour fonder à leur tour un contre-Comité, à l'imitation des Turcs de Resna et Perlépé. Un avocat, nommé Yousouf Effendi, préside provisoirement à ces réunions. Où aboutira cette tendance, si les Turcs, de jour en jour provoqués et irrités, finissaient par adopter des mesures de nature néfaste? Il n'y a pas une seconde opinion sur l'état actuel des choses ; nous couchons sur des volcans qui d'un jour à l'autre peuvent faire entendre une explosion plus au moins compliquée et désastreuse. Edib Pacha, quoique malade, développe une énergie remarquable. Soixante-douze villageois marchands, maîtres d'écoles, ont été amenés ici durant cette quinzaine ; les prisons étant insuffisantes pour les recevoir, c'est la caserne militaire qui sert pour les arrêter. Pour le moment quelques autres mesures plus ou moins infructueuses ont été introduites ; par exemple à partir de douze heures du soir à la Turque personne ne peut sortir d'une ville quelconque du vilayet pour voyage nocturne ; dans les villes à partir de 1 heure du soir à la Turque jusqu'à minuit toute personne doit porter lanterne, après minuit même avec lanterne sera examinée par les patrouilles ; on dit que le Gouverneur-Général a un programme plus sérieux sur l'état actuel et qu'il le mettra en vigueur sous peu.

(Translation.)

(Extract.) *Monastir, March* 3, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report as follows :—

On the 24th February, at the village of Sistevo, one and a-half hours from Castoria, a Bulgarian band of fourteen persons installed themselves in the house of the Bulgarian village school-mistress and summoned the villagers in order to instruct them in the ideas of the Committee. The Hukumet, who was informed, hastened to surround the spot. The bandits, seeing the soldiers approach, tried to withdraw from the village, leaving by a secret opening in the back of the house. It seems that the band was familiar with the village. The retreat naturally took place under a heavy fire from both sides. Four Bulgarians were killed besides the school-mistress (whose dead hand still grasped her revolver) ; on the other side two soldiers fell. The majority of the inhabitants of the village have left their homes and followed the band ; those who remained have been arrested. It is to be remarked that now by "band" I do not mean, as usually, individuals coming from Bulgaria who have formed bands by joining to themselves people of the country (like the bands of Marco, Kotte, Milenco, &c.), and parading the villages.

At the present moment it is the inhabitants themselves of two or three neighbouring villages who form bands by uniting into little groups and going into other villages to spread revolutionary propaganda, or into the villages of the Greek party to induce them, by persuasion or threats, to join the Bulgarians. At other times they arrange ambuscades at various cross-roads to kill the Turks, with whom they have a standing feud. So just now one cannot say how many bands there are. Every day more villagers become bandits, and the state of affairs is thereby rendered very critical, especially in view of the measures that will probably be taken by the Turkish population. At Resna (a little town five hours from Monastir) the week before last a Græcophil shopkeeper named Tassi was killed by mistake instead of another Tassi, one of the most fanatical of the Bulgarian party. The Bulgarians, knowing that the misdirected blow of the Turkish Committee was aimed at their man to avenge three Turks (Bekchis) who had been wounded by the Bulgarians some time before, fired in the open street of Resna at the Vice-President of the Turkish Committee: the bullet hit his arm; any number of domiciliary visits followed, and the authorities have brought here some twenty Männlicher rifles, and have arrested, among others, the three masters of the Bulgarian school in Resna.

On the Perlepe Road last Tuesday two Turkish "agas" (small rentiers), on their way here were killed by Bulgarians in ambush; a Jew was also in the carriage. In consequence of his cries and tears the aggressors let him go, and bade him, when he got back to Monastir, tell the Vali that it is the Bulgarian Committee that kills bad Turks. The Jew came here and informed the Hukumet, but, I am sure, did not dare repeat to the Vali, word for word, the message with which he had been charged by the assassins. This case, added to other recent events which have occurred in various parts of the vilayet, has also excited the Turks of our town, who, for some days past, have been meeting in order to found a counter Committee in imitation of the Turks of Resna and Perlepe. A lawyer named Yusuf Effendi presides provisionally at these meetings. Where will this movement end if the Turks, provoked and irritated from day to day, should finally have recourse to extreme measures? Opinion is unanimous on the present situation; we are living on volcanoes, and there may any day be an eruption bringing complications and disasters. Edib Pasha, although ill, is showing remarkable energy. Seventy-two villagers, tradesmen and school-masters, have been brought here during the last fortnight; the prisons not being large enough to hold them, they are lodged in the military barracks. For the moment some other measures, which are more or less futile, have been adopted; for instance, no one is allowed to leave any town in the vilayet on a journey after 12 o'clock at night "à la Turque"; in the towns all persons going out between 1 o'clock "à la Turque" and midnight must carry lanterns; after midnight they are examined by the guard, even if they carry lanterns; it is said that the Governor-General has more serious measures in view to deal with the present situation, and that he will put them in force shortly.

No. 165.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Vienna, March* 27, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to state that I learnt yesterday from Count Lützow that the Austro-Hungarian Government are disposed to believe that the Bulgarian Government are not giving any encouragement to the Macedonian conspirators.

His Excellency said that the Turkish Ambassador had come again to the Foreign Department yesterday with a fresh lot of instances of the insurrectionary spirit in the Balkan provinces, and with a fresh appeal to Count Goluchowski to bring pressure to bear on the Bulgarian Government.

Count Lützow said that the accounts from the Austro-Hungarian Consuls continued to give legitimate cause for anxiety, and that the danger of serious trouble breaking out was greater than it had been in previous springs. Nevertheless, he did not see that anything more could be done at Sophia than had already been done by the advice given there jointly by Austria-Hungary and Russia, and it was now for the Turks themselves to take proper measures for quelling any riots that might arise, but to observe the prudence dictated by the paramount necessity of not outraging European public opinion, as had been done on other occasions.

I noticed that Count Lützow spoke with perfect confidence of the Russian

Government as acting entirely in concert with that of Austria-Hungary for the prevention, as far as possible, of the complications which seem so threatening in the Balkan peninsula.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 166.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received March* 31.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, March* 27, 1902.

A PRESS telegram has been received from Constantinople, stating that serious representations have been made at Sophia by the Austrian and Russian Representatives, urging the Bulgarian Government to take measures to prevent the formation of organized bands for the purpose of creating trouble in Macedonia.

As the Macedonian question is the only one which at present possesses more than local interest, I alluded to the subject to-day in conversation with the Russian Minister.

His Excellency said that these representations were much needed, and he hoped they would be effectual. The Bulgarian Government, however, had to deal with a difficult situation, which, happily, does not exist in Servia.

There is, he said, a population of 30,000 Macedonians who have probably been guilty of outrages, and cannot therefore return to their own homes. They influence the Bulgarian populace, and, through them, the Government.

Although no Government could openly advocate such measures as those employed by Sarafoff and the old Macedonian Committee, it required a very strong one to enforce repressive measures against those who enjoy the secret sympathy of the population.

He was glad, he added, to hear that the Turkish Government were sending over 30,000 of their troops from Asia Minor, which he considered were the best in the service of the Porte.

Indeed, he did not anticipate much danger from excesses on the part of the regular troops, but he was apprehensive lest the decision arrived at of arming a portion of the reserves, who had not been through a regular military training, might prove to be a dangerous experiment, as such troops might very easily be guilty of excesses which it was one of the principal objects of Europe to prevent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 167.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir G. Bonham.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April* 4, 1902.

MY attention has been called by the Turkish Ambassador to preparations of a warlike nature which are taking place in Servia, in particular along the frontier of Turkey, where arms are being distributed and troops are collecting.

Please inform me if there is any foundation for the representations made by him.

No. 168.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 4, 1902.

THE Turkish Ambassador came to this Office to-day and stated that he had been instructed by his Government to call my special attention to the warlike preparations which they hear are being made in Servia, particularly along the Turkish frontier, where troops are collecting and arms are being distributed for no apparent reason.

His Excellency said that the Turkish Government are considerably disturbed by these proceedings, and hope that His Majesty's Government will take such steps as they consider advisable to check the apparently bellicose tendencies of the Servians.

I have telegraphed the substance of Anthopoulo Pasha's communication to His Majesty's Minister at Belgrade, and I have asked him what foundation there is for these representations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 169.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, April 5, 1902.*

YOUR Lordship's telegram of yesterday.

No concentration of troops has as yet taken place on Turkish frontier; a rumour has, however, been current to the effect that a single battalion is about to be sent to Vranya.

With reference to the rumours relative to arms being distributed, it appears that the third ban of the Servian army are always permitted to have arms in their possession; now, however, the second ban has received arms, an unusual circumstance against which the Turkish Minister has made representations, in answer to which he informs me that satisfactory assurances have reached him. He has also had to protest against the sale of arms in frontier villages, which, being of an obsolete pattern, were offered at 5 fr. each.

In the opinion of the Turkish Minister the attitude of the Servian Government has been friendly, but he does not consider that sufficiently active measures have been taken to prevent insurgents from Macedonia passing through Servia.

In consequence of difficulties having arisen between Albanians and Turks, the position occupied by the Servian population in Old Servia is represented to me as being more favourable at the present time by comparison with recent years.

No. 170.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 7.)

My Lord, *Sophia, March 31, 1902.*

THE "Reformi," the organ of the Macedonian Committee, gives notice that an appeal will be made for subscriptions in support of the propaganda in favour of liberation, saying that while there are no rich men in Bulgaria who might emulate the patriotic millionaires of Greece, it is open to everyone to follow the good example of the members of the Servian Society of St. Sava, and contribute to the cause according to their means.

The Government will have to see to it that this appeal is not enforced by the blackmailing methods of the old Committee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 171.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 7.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April 2, 1902.*

I RECEIVED yesterday from Sir N. O'Conor a repetition of the telegram by which His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub reported that he had heard that a band of sixty armed Bulgarians, under a Bulgarian Major, had crossed the frontier and were lying quiet in the mountains near Malesh.

Shortly afterwards M. de la Boulinière, the French Agent, came in, and I read him the telegram, and told him I proposed to send (as I afterwards did) that part of it to M. Ludskanoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, saying that the incident reported was one of those which, if true, would create a bad impression, and which it was the interest of the Bulgarian Government to do their utmost to prevent.

A long conversation followed, in the course of which I was glad to find myself in complete agreement with my colleague upon all points of the situation. The Bulgarian Government, we agreed, are sincere in their desire that disorders shall not occur at present in Macedonia and in their attempts to prevent them from being produced by incursions from this side. Whether the measures they have taken to prevent the passage of the frontier are thoroughly effective may perhaps be doubted, the means at their disposal being hardly adequate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 172.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 7.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April 3, 1902.*

THE "Delo," a Macedonian paper published at Sophia in the Sarafoff interest, relates that a band of fifteen men, who were sent across the frontier by the present Committee, under a retired Lieutenant named Stoyanoff, to endeavour to persuade the people not to listen to the agents of the local Committees who were preaching revolt, but to put their trust in the intervention of the Prince of Bulgaria and the Emperor of Russia, have returned disheartened, having found nobody ready to follow their advice.

The Ottoman Commissioner here persists in maintaining that Boris Sarafoff has recently been at Philippopoli and Chepelare, and says he has called upon the Bulgarian Government to arrest him. It is not clear what definite charge can be brought against Sarafoff at present. The Government declare that he is not in Bulgaria; and one of my colleagues tells me that his Government has reason to believe that he really is at Geneva.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 173.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 7.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 2, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the monthly summary of events in Macedonia, which has been prepared by Mr. Young.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 173.

Summary of Events in Macedonia and Albania during March 1902.

A REVIEW of the incidents of last month shows a long list of the disorders which, in the present condition of European Turkey, are the only expressions of political ideas.

Bulgarian border. Some seventeen bands can now be located in these districts on official information alone; as, when complete, each would number about thirty to forty men, this implies 600 to 700 men in the field, which is probably well within the facts.

Sir A. Biliotti. These bands are distributed as follows:

Bands led by Doncho, Zapro, and Petro, with another, in all about 100 men, in and near Melnik.

Vice-Consul Theodorides. Three small bands recruiting in the Ghevgheli district, and two with a full complement.

Sir A. Biliotti. Two bands round Demir-Hissar, one being under Zinco.

Ibid. Two bands round Kilkish.

Ibid. Two in Yenidje—one being under Pavlo; this is a Turkish district, and quite close to Salonica.

Two round Strumnitsa, under Sarafoff, who has returned from his visit to Belgrade. There is 1,000*l.* on his head, and 500*l.* on that of his colleague, Deltschev. — Sir A. Biliotti. "Information."

The bases of operations are still Kilkish, Tikvish, Perlepe, and Malesh ranges. The latter is the principal stronghold, and a large band of sixty, under a Bulgarian Major, which has just crossed the frontier, is now there. Troops have been sent to disperse this force if possible. — Mr. Fontana, March 30.

A band of sixteen armed with Männlichers was surprised early in the month, soon after crossing the frontier near Egripalanka, and surrendered after four had been shot. — Ibid., March 19.

A band operating in the Serres country waylaid and stabbed an Orthodox priest of Spatovo, leaving him for dead. His life was saved by a prayer-book in his breast pocket. — Sir A. Biliotti, March 6.

A small band fought a force of zaptiehs near Djuma with a loss of three killed; two zaptiehs were wounded. Many arrests have taken place. — Ibid., March 3. Ibid., March 18.

At Gradesnitza, a Bulgar village, three gendarmes sent to search for arms were shot by the villagers, who subsequently took to the hills and left their village to be looted. — "Torgovskyi Vyestnik."

A Greek teacher of Serbinovo, one Ekonomov, tried to betray Paulo Lavkov, a fellow villager, who had been arrested for complicity in the Stone case, but had escaped and taken to the hills. The village was surrounded by detachments from Menlik, Razlog, and Djuma, and severely ransacked, but nothing found. The teacher had fled to Nevrokop where, the Committee organ says, "Vengeance will yet reach him, even under the wing of the oppressor." — Ibid. "Reformi."

A band had the worst of a fight near Leshko, probably the same as that reported at Litsia, near Nevrokop, in which the troops lost two, and the band, four killed; the survivors were pursued to the frontier near Djuma. — Mr. Elliot. Athens press.

Only villagers from the three Turkish villages venture to go to Djuma bazar; those of the thirty-four Christian villages no longer do so, as they are regularly plundered on the road by the patrols. The bridge and ford over the Struma is held by a post which allows none to pass. — "Reformi."

At Moutoulovo (Motol), near Kilkish, and only an hour and a-half by rail from Salonica, a band lost three killed and two wounded. There are two versions of this fight—one, the official account, describes the usual skirmish, and the subsequent discovery of three dead and two wounded in a gully, the latter showing marks of having been beaten. The Bulgar version is that fugitive villagers from Motol were fired on by a band of Bashi-Bozouks, *i.e.*, armed Moslem villagers who killed three and severely maltreated two boys; they then went on to Motol, which they looted. As the district is one with a relatively large Moslem population, and such bands of armed Moslem villagers have appeared elsewhere in co-operation with the troops, the story is probably true. — Sir A. Biliotti. March 27. "Reformi." Petition of villagers to Sir A. Biliotti.

The apprehension felt as to a movement of Moslems against the Christians has, to some extent, been justified by the appearance of armed bands of Turkish villagers—referred to by the Bulgar press as "Bashi-Bozouks," and by the official reports as "Counter-Committees." So far they have only acted in co-operation with troops, and do not appear to have much exceeded what were probably their orders, so that as yet the movement may be considered to be in hand. The region where it would be most dangerous is the Rhodope. Sarafoff's Committee have of late been active in promoting a campaign on the Pomak border; Cheperli is reported to have been made a base of operations, and Kocho Giorgiev, a henchman of Sarafoff, and one of the many reputed capturers of Miss Stone, has been established at Philippopoli to conduct operations. As a result, bands have appeared as far north as Adrianople, and one recently fought its way through a Turkish cordon at Pasmakli, on the north watershed of the Rhodope. This has had the probably desired effect of violently irritating the Pomaks, who, especially in the Akhi-Chelebi district, are clamouring to be led against the Christians. — "Bashi Bozouks" and Counter-Committee of Turkish bands. In the Rhodope. Mr. McGregor. "Reformi."

The Turkish Counter-Committee has a sort of political organization in Monastir under one Yusuf Effendi; but its political activity is less effective than its action in the field. In reprisal for the murder of three Turkish bekjis at Resna, it decided to murder a prominent Bulgar named Tassi, but killed instead a Greek merchant and supporter of the Government of the same name. The Bulgar Committee, taking the will for the deed, retaliated in their efficient way by putting a bullet into the arm of the Vice-President of the Turkish Committee in Monastir High Street. The Administration had to come to the support of the Turkish Committee, and arrest three Bulgarian schoolmasters and many others. The Turkish movement is less ineffective in the field, as — In Monastir. Mr. Pissurica. Bulgarian bands in Monastir.

appears from the thoroughness with which their bands did their work at Yakoruda reported last month, at Motol, mentioned above, and at Shestovo.

Mr. Pissurica, March 4.

This place, about one and a-half hours from Kastoria, was the scene of a fight, of which the details, from official and Bulgarian information, are given as illustrative of the temper of the Bulgar agitators.

Last year Kuzo Stephov, Bulgar teacher of Shestovo, was arrested, but bought his escape from his escort, after which he took to the hills with a few followers. During the winter he made Shestovo his head-quarters, and in February a force of about 100 gendarmes was set on his track. About the 13th February—Mr. Pissurica gives a date ten days later—after a running fight all day, the band took refuge in Shestovo, and fortified itself in the school. The troops stood to arms all night round the village, and fired volleys at any one trying to leave; three villagers were killed, whom the official account gives as members of the band, but who probably being, two of them old men and one a boy, had trusted to being let through the cordon as non-combatants. In the morning most of the band and many of the villagers fought their way out, but Kuzo, with three others and a girl, the schoolmistress, held the school-house until they were all shot; or by another version, shot themselves. The girl fired her last ammunition as the troops closed in and shot herself with the last cartridge. The heads were cut off and sent to Kastoria for identification, but later information adds that the zaptiehs carrying them were waylaid by the villagers and made to give them up. The village was plundered by Moslem villagers and its former inhabitants, except fifteen, who were taken to Kastoria, are now in the hills.

Detailed information as to the whereabouts and action of the numerous bands in this villayet last month is wanting.

Prince Mavrocordato.

Greek official reports state that Orthodox priests have been expelled from the villages of Kortenetsi, Zomanitsa, Schambressi, Podjivista, Konoblatti, and Zagoritsani. Cholista has been coerced into accepting the Exarchate by Petroff.

Mr. Pissurica.

Edib Pasha, the new Vali of Monastir, though not in good health, and hampered personally and politically in many ways, has shown considerable energy and commendable moderation in meeting with the Bulgar movement. After sunset no one is allowed to leave any town in the vilayet, or to go about the streets without a lantern, and after midnight all outside their houses are liable to arrest. The prisons are long ago full, and barracks are being used as such, though some fifty convicts, among them the well-known School Inspector, Dangan Grujev, have already been sent off to Anatolia. The schoolmasters of Vodena, Dolni Pirojh, Petritch, and other places, have been arrested. His moderation, on the other hand, is admitted by the Bulgarian press, from which the following instances are taken:—

"Information."

In Bukri, Casa of Lerin, villagers took refuge from street fighting in a church, and preparations were being made to set it on fire, which were stopped by Edib. Again, he counter-ordered the burning of Shestovo, for which the Kaïmakam of Kastoria had given orders. He is also trying, by use of photography, to stop the barbarous custom of sending in heads for identification.

Besides the repressive effect of such strong administration, the moral impression caused by the calling out of the "Slavs" is said to be great, and the withdrawal from the villages, and the placing under direct military control, of many Moslem combatants, may well make for peace, provided the control can be maintained.

Albania and Old Servia.

The disturbed areas of Albania have shown no improvement, though the serious consequences anticipated from the murder of the Mollah Zekko have not resulted. The Albanians still threaten to avenge his death on the Servians because the murderer Adam Zaim had some time before been for a short time in Belgrade. Zaim has already been taken out of gaol and is in hospital. Decorations and military grades have been freely given to prominent Zekkoites and Bairam Zur, an ally of Zekko, has been sent to Ipek to use his influence for order.

Mr. Fontana, March 20.

"Torgovskyi Vyestnik."

Ibid.

A blood feud between him and a wealthy contractor at Diakova—Murteza Pasha—led to an attack on the latter's house by 2,000 of the Bairam's followers, in which seven were killed before the arrival of Shemshi Pasha with two battalions, who, after killing a few more, restored order and rescued Murteza. A battalion was left at Djakovo.

Mr. Fontana.

Ibrahim Kabash, son of an ex-official removed to Constantinople for raiding Christians, raised a force of 1,000 Albanians, and, after looting several villages, came into Prisrend, where he established himself with his plunder, and threatened the Mutessarif's life unless his father were sent back. The town was quite in his power and in a state of siege. The Palace was telegraphed to, and in reply there came a letter from Rustum Pasha, the father, telling his son to go home, which he did.

Ibrahim Bey, Kaïmakam of Gusinje, on the Montenegrin border, was murdered by Rogovo Albanians, friends of one he had expelled, while on his way to Ipek. A change of Mutessarif at Ipek, Shevki Bey, a Constantinople War Office official, replacing Salih Bey, is one consequence of this murder. Mr. Fontana.

In Prishtina one or more murders are of daily occurrence, and recently no less than fifty-eight were killed in a vendetta fight. Ibid.

The Servians are sullenly awaiting some encouragement for a hopeless revolt against their intolerable condition.

There is a rumour that the Russians intend to establish a Vice-Consulate at Mitrovitza. The Albanians maintain they will not allow this. They have one, however, at Prisrend.

A French Vice-Consul has been appointed for Uskub.

The Bosniaks, of Novi-Bazar, who have succeeded in maintaining a certain independence and traditions of better things under the Austrian administration they now mostly regret having abandoned, are speaking openly of their desire to find themselves again under it. They are a hardy and self-reliant race, and under the rule of their four khojas, or priests, have for some time refused taxes and boldly proclaimed their grievances.

The general situation is thus described: "Mutessarifs and Kaïmakams seem but puppets made to change places whenever Albanian violence requires a change in the Local Government. An Albanian need apparently only collect followers and make himself a nuisance to obtain rank or decorations, though no Moslem Albanian community are allowed to open a school even at their own expense." This latter restriction and educational privileges of Christians are deeply resented by the better-class Albanian.

The Mirdites, the hardiest and most inaccessible of the northern tribes, have been agitating for the return of their Prince, Bib Doda, now for many years an exile in Constantinople. Having called attention to their grievances by cutting wires, blocking passes, and seizing Kurt Bey, a sort of Political Resident, they are now undergoing a military blockade, which the nearness of the frontier, and the venality of the cordon renders less effective than it sounds. Mr. Prendergast, March 20 and 23.

Whereas in the north discontent takes a military expression, in the less belligerent south it finds vent in foreign intrigue. Less self-dependent than the northern Ghegs, the Tosks seem to be inclined to open relations with sympathizers and compatriots in Italy. The leaders of the Albanian Colonies in South Italy have of late held several meetings and their Central Committee at Rome under one Lorrecchio has declared for a policy of pursuing autonomy for Albania by Italian intervention. In opposition to this movement a Greco-Servian Committee has, it is reported, established itself at Corfu with a programme for the partition of Macedonia between Greece, Servia, and Bulgaria; of Albania between Greece, Servia, and Montenegro, and for annexing Epirus to Greece. South Albania. "Nea Emera." "Information."

No. 174.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 7.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, April* 4, 1902.

COUNT LÜTZOW, whom I saw yesterday, told me that although the latest reports received here continued to be very disquieting, there was reason to hope that the measures taken by the Turkish authorities would prevent the outbreak of insurrection, but, of course, an incident might arise at any moment which would bring on the crisis.

He added that he considered the present Bulgarian Government were anxious to prevent disorder, but if the insurrection were actually to break out in Macedonia, their hand might be forced, and it was difficult to foresee what might then happen.

I noticed that his Excellency, in speaking of M. Daneff's visit to St. Petersburgh, showed no anxiety, and seemed satisfied that the advice which the Bulgarian statesmen would receive from the Russian Government would be in the interests of peace.

No. 175.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 8.)

(Extract.) *St. Petersburgh, April* 2, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival in this capital of the Bulgarian Prime Minister, M. Daneff, who has been received in audience by the Emperor, and had an interview with Count Lamsdorff.

There is a general impression that the Bulgarian Minister's visit to this Court is chiefly connected with the financial arrangements of that State, but no doubt advantage has also been taken of it by Count Lamsdorff to impress strongly on M. Daneff the serious responsibility which the Bulgarian Government would incur by any relaxation of its efforts to control and check the agitation of the Macedonian Committees.

Count Lamsdorff, at my last interview with him last week, adhered to his opinion, that the danger of serious disturbances in that quarter was not at present greater than it had been at the corresponding season of past years, perhaps even not so great.

No. 176.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 9, 1902.

THE Turkish Ambassador spoke to me to-day with great earnestness upon the subject of the disorders prevailing in Bulgaria, and read me a despatch of which the following is a summary:—

In spite of the assurances of Bulgaria, given in consequence of the steps taken by the Great Powers, numerous bands of brigands have been formed in that country, and no measures are taken by the Government of the Principality to prevent their formation. Bulgarian officers, also with the full knowledge of the authorities, excite the population to attack the European provinces of Turkey.

Colonel Yankoff, for instance, who goes about making revolutionary speeches in various towns of the Principality, has held two meetings on two successive evenings in the Hall of the Committee at Widdin, when he urged the inhabitants to prepare for an attack on the Turkish provinces, to organize rifle shooting Societies, and to be instructed in military exercises in the presence of other officers. He has also distributed printed notices to the inhabitants of other towns, announcing his approaching arrival.

Notwithstanding these proceedings, the Ottoman Government, who are obliged to keep a large force to maintain public order and security, continue to recommend the inhabitants of their provinces to be patient and calm, in spite of the outrages which they suffer at the hands of the Bulgarian brigands.

Although the intimidation practised by the Bulgarian Committees is intended to corrupt a large number of peaceful and loyal persons, the Imperial Government, in a spirit of mercy and in accordance with the recommendations of the Powers, act with the greatest moderation, and do not resort to all the methods which the law prescribes. But this moderation, and the measures which the Turkish Government have taken can be of no avail so long as Bulgaria continues to persist in her present attitude.

On the other hand, the Imperial Government will suffer prejudice on account of the military measures which they are obliged to take and the pecuniary sacrifices which they are incurring, and it is certain that a continuation of this state of things will produce a growth of revolutionary ideas among the population.

In these circumstances, it is obvious that the Bulgarian Government is, like all regular Governments, in duty bound to carry out their assurances, not verbally and in part, but effectively and in their entirety.

Otherwise, the Imperial Government should have a free hand to take proper measures to safeguard their rights, which are suffering great injury from the proceedings of the Revolutionary Committees and the acts of the bands which they are sending into the Turkish provinces.

His Excellency also informed me that the Turkish Minister at Bucharest had

informed the Turkish Government that the Roumanian Government was extremely uneasy with regard to the progress of the Bulgarian agitation. They were under the impression that the agitators were likely to commit the worst outrages in order to provoke violent measures of repression, which would create a reaction in their favour.

Similar intelligence had been received by the Turkish Government from their Commissioners at Sophia and Monastir.

The Bulgarian Committees were collecting funds, distributing arms, and in some cases assassinating those who refused to join them. A small band of Bulgarian brigands had actually crossed the frontier near Adrianople, had seized three Mussulmans and a child, and had cut them to pieces in the most barbarous manner, afterwards making good their escape. A leading part was taken by a notorious character known as Jovan, of Scopia. There was no pretext that these crimes were committed for the sake of vengeance or robbery, and it was evident that they were political in their complexion.

His Excellency hoped that His Majesty's Government would make representations to the Bulgarian Government in order to induce them to put a stop to this dangerous state of things. He explained that similar representations had been made to the other Powers.

I replied that we should be quite ready to consider, in consultation with other Governments, whether there was any use in making representations such as he had suggested. I expressed my fear that it might be beyond the power of the Bulgarian Government to control the bands of whose lawlessness the complaint was made.

His Excellency replied that the Bulgarian Government might, at any rate, prevent officers in their own service from making incendiary speeches such as those which had been delivered by Colonel Yankoff, as described in the despatch which he had read to me.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 177.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 9, 1902.

THE French Ambassador asked me to-day whether I had received any representations from the Turkish Government with regard to the agitation in Bulgaria.

I gave his Excellency a brief summary of the statement which had been made to me by the Turkish Ambassador this afternoon (see my despatch of to-day's date to Sir N. O'Conor), and I said that, although I did not feel confident that there was much to be gained by giving advice to the Bulgarian Government, I thought His Majesty's Government would be disposed to join with the other Powers in impressing upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of making all possible efforts to repress these disorders.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 178.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Plunkett.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 10, 1902.

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador spoke to me to-day on the subject of affairs in the Balkan Peninsula, and I repeated to his Excellency the substance of my conversation yesterday with the Turkish Ambassador (see my despatch to Sir N. O'Conor of the 9th instant).

His Excellency told me that he was not very apprehensive of serious disorders arising, and that he was under the impression that Russia had intimated plainly that she did not desire the peace to be broken. He did not himself think that there was much to be gained by representations to the Bulgarian Government, but they could do

no harm, and they might perhaps have the effect of preventing incidents such as the speech said by the Turkish Government to have been delivered by Colonel Yankoff.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 179.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, April 12, 1902.*

THE terms of the Porte's Circular telegram of the 4th April—which resembled those of a similar Circular issued shortly before the Græco-Turkish war—the reported increase of Turkish troops on the frontier, and the military requisitions for the Adrianople Army Corps, have caused some uneasiness to be felt by the Bulgarian Government.

They have prohibited the sale of arms in the Prefectures of Sophia, Kustendil, and Philippopoli, and are also removing Macedonian leaders from the frontier, and keeping watch on others in different parts of the country.

No. 180.

Anthopoulo Pasha to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 12.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne, et a l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de sa Seigneurie les renseignements suivants, qu'il vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement :—

Le Comité Bulgare a recruté quarante personnes moyennant un salaire de 2 fr. par jour, et après les avoir coiffés de Calpaks blancs, les a renvoyés pour franchir la ligne de démarcation du côté de Keustendil. Deux cents Bulgares se sont aussi rendus du côté de Doubnitza pour pénétrer de là dans les villages du district de Perlépé. En outre, 600 fusils du système Carnicaset, 18 caisses de cartouches provenant du dépôt d'armes de Keustendil, ont été remis à Ivankoff Frères pour être introduits dans la province voisine de l'Empire sous la direction du susdit Comité.

Sept brigands faisant partie de cette bande ont dernièrement pénétré dans le village d'Odikeuy, district de Perlépé, et se sont retranchés dans une tour. Informées de ce fait, les autorités Impériales envoyèrent sur les lieux un détachement composé de soldats et de gendarmes, sous les ordres d'un officier, et invitèrent, au nom de la loi, les brigands à se rendre. Ceux-ci ayant répondu par des coups de feu, un combat s'en suivit entre les assiégés et les assiégeants, qui réussirent le lendemain matin à se rendre maîtres de la situation ; comme ils ont montré une résistance acharnée, le résultat en a été que tous les brigands sont tombés morts. Ils étaient armés de fusils Gras. On a en outre découvert sur eux des papiers séditieux écrits en langue Bulgare.

Tout en faisant part à sa Seigneurie de ce qui précède, Anthopoulos Pacha croit devoir attirer tout particulièrement son attention sur le fait que les armes en question ont été distribuées par le dépôt d'armes du Gouvernement Bulgare, et il espère qu'elle voudra bien intervenir auprès du Gouvernement Bulgare, afin qu'un terme soit mis à ces agissements, qui compromettent la Principauté.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,
Londres, le 11 *Avril,* 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Ambassador presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and has the honour to communicate to his Lordship the following information which he has just received from his Government :—

The Bulgarian Committee enlisted forty persons promising them pay at the rate of 2 fr. a-day, and after providing them with white caps, sent them with orders to cross the frontier near Kustendil. 200 Bulgarians also went towards Dubnitza to go thence to the villages of the district of Perlépé. Further, 600 guns of the Carnicaset model and 18 cases of cartridges from the Kustendil arms depôt were handed over to the Brothers

Ivankoff to be taken into the neighbouring province of the Empire under the direction of the above-mentioned Committee.

Seven brigands belonging to this band recently entered the village of Odikeuy, in the district of Perlépé, and took possession of a tower. On hearing of this, the Imperial authorities sent to the spot a detachment of soldiers and gendarmes under an officer, who called upon the brigands to surrender. The brigands having replied with shots, fighting took place, and the besieging party the next morning overcame the brigands, who resisted desperately and were all killed. They were armed with Gras rifles. Seditious papers in Bulgarian were found upon them.

Anthopoulo Pasha desires to call particular attention to the circumstance that the arms in question were distributed by the arms depôt of the Bulgarian Government, and he hopes that his Lordship will be so good as to cause representations to be made to the Bulgarian Government to induce them to put an end to these proceedings, which compromise the Principality.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
April 11, 1902.

No. 181.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, April* 12, 1902.

ON more than one occasion the Turkish Government has called our attention to the danger arising from the agitation, which is said to be originated in Bulgaria, against Turkish rule in Macedonia.

They have recently called particular attention to the incendiary speeches delivered by Colonel Yankoff and others, and of the alleged distribution of arms from Bulgarian depôts.

I authorize you to join with your colleagues in impressing upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of discouraging all such movements.

The Turkish Government has been constantly advised by us to exercise caution and moderation in repressing any disturbances that may arise, and it is incumbent on the Bulgarian Government on its side to avoid carefully any action or omission which can give legitimate cause for complaint on the part of the Porte.

No. 182.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 12, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th instant, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a note from the Turkish Ambassador,† making a further complaint respecting the action of Bulgarian Agents in creating agitation and disturbances in Macedonia.

I have to-day informed his Excellency, in reply, that I have authorized His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Sophia to join with his colleagues in impressing upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of discouraging all movements of the kind complained of.

I added that I had just received a telegram from Mr. Elliot, reporting that the Bulgarian Government had prohibited the sale of arms in the Prefectures of Sophia, Philippopoli, and Kustendil, and that they were also removing the leaders of the Macedonian agitation from the frontier and keeping a watch on those in other parts of the country.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

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* Repeated to Sir E. Monson, Sir F. Lascelles, Lord Currie, Sir F. Plunkett, and Sir C. Scott.
† No. 180.

No. 183.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 14.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 7, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to state that the day before yesterday, at the reception of M. Ludskanoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, I referred to the information I had sent him, on a report from Mr. Fontana to Sir N. O'Conor, that a band of sixty armed Bulgarians, under a Bulgarian major, had crossed the frontier.

His Excellency said he had made inquiries, and had satisfied himself that the report could not be true, since there was no officer of the rank of major connected with the Macedonian movement. There were some retired captains who might join a raid, but a watch was being kept upon them. As for the band of sixty men, it was impossible for such a party to cross the frontier together; individuals could cross, and meet at a rendezvous on the other side, for, although the utmost vigilance was used to prevent the passage of suspicious persons, it was impossible to learn the real business of every apparently harmless wayfarer.

M. Ludskanoff also said he understood the frontier was inefficiently guarded on the Turkish side at night, when the men who lined it in the daytime, and made clandestine passage impracticable, withdrew into the block-houses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 184.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 14.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 9, 1902.

THE British Vice-Consul at Rustchuk reported as follows on the 31st March: "With regard to the rumours of Macedonian agitation which are appearing in many newspapers just now, I cannot find that anything special is being done here, except that men are undoubtedly leaving for the south—not in very great numbers, still they are steadily going."

I have, however, since been told by my Austro-Hungarian colleague that the rifles belonging to the Rustchuk Rifle Club, which, with others of the same kind, was closed by the Government at the beginning of last year, have been sent to Küstendil, being taken in three carriages to the Rustchuk railway station quite openly, tied in bundles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 185.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.— (*Received April* 14.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, April* 5, 1902.

AT Dr. Vouitch's last weekly reception I called his attention to a somewhat alarmist telegram about armed bands of Servians having penetrated into Macedonia. He assured me that there was no truth in the rumour. There were, however, agitators who, taking advantage of the prevailing feeling of insecurity, went about the frontier districts spreading false rumours which were very liable to cause mischief amongst a population without the means of correcting them. His Excellency's language did not lead me to think that he anticipates trouble in the frontier districts.

Having heard from the Turkish Minister that he had been making representations with regard to members of the revolutionary party in Macedonia being allowed to travel freely through Servia, I alluded to the matter. Dr. Vouitch replied that the Government knew these men and had them under their surveillance. I gather that the Turkish Minister had asked for their arrest, and it was this which called forth his remark, reported in my telegram of to-day's date, that the Servian Government, although showing a friendly disposition, did not take sufficiently active measures to

assist the Turkish Government by preventing these men from travelling through Servia, which he attributed to deference to Bulgaria and the desire to avoid questions in the Skupshtina. Fethy Pasha, whose information of what takes place on the frontier is always remarkably accurate, also gave me information relative to the alleged concentration of troops and the distribution of arms in the frontier districts.

M. Boscovitch, the Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in speaking of the Macedonian question, remarked that the scene of the disturbances has shifted this year from the district of Old Servia to a part of Albania, bordering on Montenegro, where, owing to the death of Mollah Zekko, who in February last was killed near Pec by a Turkish Captain of gendarmerie, serious disturbances had arisen between the Albanians, who wish for independence, and those who it appears still support the Turkish rule, the result of this being that the attention of the Albanians had been diverted from the inhabitants of Old Servia, who were consequently enjoying greater tranquillity at present than at any time during recent years.

No. 186.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 14.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, April* 8, 1902.

APART from the question of the recognition of Mgr. Firmilian and its possible influence on the action and policy of the Bulgarian Government and the Revolutionary Committees, there is, on the whole, rather an improvement in the general reports from the disturbed districts of Macedonia.

The Grand Vizier has issued the instructions to the Valis throughout the province of which His Highness spoke to me, as reported in my despatch of the 25th March. It is addressed to the Governors-General of Kossovo, Monastir, Salonica, and Adrianople, and is dated the 17th (4th) March. It is an admirable Circular instruction, drawn up in clear and simple language, and if faithfully executed by the Valis it can hardly fail to prevent crime and massacre and acts of cruelty towards the inoffensive population, whatever may be the conduct of the insurgent bands. It is worded as follows:—

"You are aware that the real object of Bulgaria is to unite with those of the same race in Macedonia, and to attempt to destroy the Mussulman and Greek elements. So long as the forces of Turkey put a stop to and destroy the actions of the Revolutionary Committees in a lawful manner, the Powers will not protect Bulgaria nor interfere with Turkey in the execution of her special duties. Hence the Bulgarian Committees have adopted other means for attaining their end. This consists in irritating the Mussulman population and forcing them to reprisals, and so cause a massacre. Should such a massacre take place public opinion in Europe will be much excited, and if there are any protectors of the Bulgarians they will come forward, and this may bring about concerted action by the Powers, and thus lead to deplorable consequences for Turkey. In a word: First, whenever bands appear you must allow them no time to spread and extend their action, but at once destroy them and stop their violence. Secondly, this must be done with the aid of regular troops and regular police, and on no account whatever must any member of the public be employed in it. Thirdly, as to the chief aim of the Revolutionists to stir up the Mussulmans to vengeance by injuring them and driving them to extremity, if such should happen the Mussulmans must show the patience and fortitude which distinguishes them, and the sufferers must not seek revenge themselves, but obtain it by means of the overwhelming force and just and legal measures of the State. This must in the present juncture be the guide of officials and all loyal people. If these principles be followed it will be clear who is a rebel and a traitor and what are the rights of the State, and will also prevent all foreign intervention and its baneful consequences. Otherwise the question may become grave. To you is intrusted the task of receiving these orders in the proper spirit, and seeing that they are carried out in your jurisdiction."

No. 187.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 14.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, April 10, 1902.*

WHEN I saw Count Goluchowski yesterday at his weekly reception, I found his Excellency still disposed to hope that the local disturbances in Macedonia and Albania would be suppressed by the Turks without giving rise to any general outbreak of fanaticism.

At the same time his Excellency admitted that the situation was full of possible dangers, and that any sudden incident might lead to a conflagration.

The Austro-Hungarian Government continue to believe that the Bulgarian Government are honestly anxious to prevent an outbreak, but they doubt the power of that Government to resist the strong feeling which would be aroused in Bulgaria if the Macedonians should rise against the Mussulmans.

No. 188.

Aide-mémoires communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, April 14, 1902.

RÉSUMÉ de la communication télégraphique faite par le Ministre de l'Intérieur aux Gouverneurs-Généraux de Salonique, Monastir, Kossovo, et Andrinople d'après les instructions du Grand Vizir.

Pour empêcher la propagation des agissements des révolutionnaires Bulgares les Gouverneurs-Généraux ne doivent employer que des forces régulières et tous les soins doivent être scrupuleusement employés par eux pour maintenir la tranquillité. Dans le cas où un incident surviendrait, la plus grande énergie doit être déployée pour qu'il soit immédiatement apaisé par la force militaire et sans permettre à une seule personne de la population de s'en mêler d'aucune façon; toutes les mesures doivent être prises pour qu'aucun conflit ne s'élève entre les sujets Ottomans, quels qu'ils soient, dans ces vilayets.

(1.)

D'après un rapport du Secrétaire du Commissariat Impérial Ottoman à Sophia en date du 22 Mars, 1902, il appert que Boris Sarafoff est rentré le 21 Mars à Philippopoli et a distribué des invitations au Comité Macédonien de cette ville en vue de tenir une réunion à 2 heures de l'après-midi afin d'y discuter une question très urgente. Sarafoff a pris part à cette réunion, et bien que le sujet des délibérations n'ait pas encore transpiré, étant donnée la rumeur qui circule à Philippopoli, qu'une bande Bulgare se prépare à franchir la frontière Ottomane, on croit que les délibérations en question ont eu pour objet de soutenir cette bande et de l'encourager à continuer ses efforts pour réussir à traverser la dite frontière.

(2.)

Communication de son Altesse le Grand Vizir à son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

Constantinople, le 1er Avril, 1902.

A la succursale du Comité Macédonien à Sophia, sous la direction de Sarafoff, le nommé Pétroff, qui a commis plusieurs méfaits dans les provinces Ottomanes, a été inscrit au service du dit Comité. Cet individu, avec douze acolytes, doit se rendre de Dubindja à Juma et une autre bande d'agitateurs doit également se porter vers la même direction. Il a été entendu qu'aux Fêtes de Pâques les Comités Bulgares donneront le signal d'un soulèvement et qu'on commencera le mouvement à Perlépé, Repoulo, et Manlik, et que les résidences des Gouverneurs seront incendiées et les lignes télégraphiques détruites.

Le dit Comité de Sophia a envoyé aux autres Comités des communications portant que ceux qui partagent l'opinion de Sarafoff et qui sont en état de porter des armes, devront se réunir à Sophia pour exécuter les ordres susmentionnés.

(3.)

Sandaneski, Chef de brigands, qui a enlevé Miss Stone, et l'agitateur Velt, un Chef qui, avec une trentaine de bandits, a commis un grand nombre de méfaits en Macédoine sont retournés dernièrement de Kustendil à Sophia et se prépareraient à enlever un des Consuls étrangers se trouvant dans les vilayets limitrophes.

(4.)

Communication du Ministre de la Guerre au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

Constantinople, le 2 Avril, 1902.

Le 22 Février dernier, pendant la nuit, entre les redoutes de Douzen et Kiz-Souyou, six Bulgares, ayant dépassé la ligne de démarcation de plus de 2,000 mètres, ont été rencontrés par des soldats Ottomans, qui leur ont demandé de leur délivrer leurs armes. Les Bulgares ont d'abord fait feu sur les troupes et ensuite se sont enfuis. A cause de la nuit il fut impossible de les poursuivre, mais le lendemain, comme ils avaient laissé des traces sur la neige, il a été possible de découvrir que quatre d'entre eux étaient déjà partis pour la Roumélie-Orientale, tandis que les deux autres s'étaient dirigés sur la redoute de Douzen.

Les cartouches trouvées sur le lieu de la rencontre prouvent que les armes dont ces agitateurs se sont servis étaient des fusils Mannlicher et des Berdan, ce qui démontre que tout au moins quelques-uns appartenaient à l'armée Bulgare.

(5.)

Communication du Grand Vizir au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

Constantinople, le 2 Avril, 1902.

En réponse à votre communication en date du 14 Mars écoulé concernant la recommandation faite par les Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre et d'Autriche-Hongrie pour user de modération afin d'empêcher tout conflit entre les soldats Ottomans et les habitants de Merdita qui étaient cernés sur l'ordre du Gouverneur-Général pour avoir détruit les lignes télégraphiques entre Scutari et Monastir, des instructions avaient été données au dit Gouverneur-Général dans le sens désiré par ces deux Ambassadeurs.

En réponse le Gouverneur-Général vient de faire savoir qu'un certain nombre d'habitants de Merdita se sont rendus dans la direction de Letch et de Zadrima et ont commis des excès, tels que vols et autres actes de brigandage, et qu'ils ont rendu impraticable la route qui conduit à Panha et ont en outre coupé les fils télégraphiques dans cette localité. Bien que les autorités locales aient fait tout en leur pouvoir pour leur persuader de se désister, la modération employée vis-à-vis d'eux n'a eu d'autre résultat que de les encourager davantage dans leur attitude de menaces. On a donc été obligé de ne pas laisser un seul habitant de cette localité franchir le cordon de troupes jusqu'à ce qu'il se soit soumis, ce qui a amené un prompt réglement de cette affaire.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 14 *Avril,* 1902.

(Translation.)

RÉSUMÉ of the telegraphic communication made by the Minister of the Interior to the Governors-General of Salonica, Monastir, Kossovo, and Adrianople on instructions from the Grand Vizier.

In order to prevent the agitation of the revolutionary Bulgarians from spreading, the Governors-General are to employ regular forces only, and every care is to be taken by them to maintain order. Should any incident occur, the greatest energy must be used for its immediate suppression by the troops, no person of the population being permitted to interfere in any way; every measure is to be taken to prevent any conflict among Ottoman subjects, whoever they may be, in these vilayets.

(1.)

From a report of the Secretary of the Imperial Ottoman Commissioner at Sophia, dated the 22nd March, 1902, it appears that Boris Sarafoff returned to Philippopoli on the 21st March and distributed invitations to the Macedonian Committee of that town with a view to holding a meeting at 2 o'clock in the afternoon for the discussion of a most urgent matter. Sarafoff took part in this meeting, and though the subject of deliberation has not yet transpired, in view of the rumour abroad at Philippopoli that a Bulgarian band is preparing to cross the Ottoman frontier, it is thought that the object of the said discussion was to support this band and to encourage it to continue its efforts to cross the frontier.

(2.)

Communication from His Highness the Grand Vizier to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Constantinople, April 1, 1902.

At the branch office of the Macedonian Committee at Sophia, under Sarafoff's direction, a certain Petroff, who has been guilty of several crimes in the Ottoman provinces, was enrolled into the service of the said Committee. This person with twelve followers is to make his way from Dubindja to Juma, and another band of agitators is to march in the same direction. It has been arranged that on Easter Day the Bulgarian Committees will give the signal for a rising, and that the movement will begin at Perlépé, Repoulo, and Manlik, that the Governors' residences will be burnt and the telegraph lines destroyed.

The Sophia Committee has sent word to the other Committees that those who share Sarafoff's views and are capable of bearing arms are to assemble at Sophia to carry out the above-mentioned orders.

(3.)

Sandaneski, the brigand chief who captured Miss Stone, and the agitator Velt, who with some thirty bandits has been guilty of numerous crimes in Macedonia, have lately returned from Kustendil to Sophia and are said to be preparing to carry off one of the foreign Consuls in the neighbouring vilayets.

(4.)

Communication from the Minister for War to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Constantinople, April 2, 1902.

On the night of the 22nd February, six Bulgarians having crossed the frontier and proceeded for a distance of more than 2,000 metres, between the redoubts of Duzen and Kiz-Suyu, were met by Ottoman soldiers, who called upon them to deliver up their arms. The Bulgarians fired on the troops and then fled. Night made pursuit impossible, but on the morrow their tracks on the snow showed that four of them had already left for Eastern Roumelia, while the other two had directed their course towards the Duzen redoubt.

Cartridges picked up on the scene of the encounter proved that these agitators had used Männlicher and Berdan rifles, which shows that at anyrate some of them belonged to the Bulgarian army.

(5.)

Communication from the Grand Vizier to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Constantinople, April 2, 1902.

In reply to your communication of the 14th March last, relative to the recommendation made by the British and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors that moderation should be used, in order to prevent any conflict between the Ottoman troops and the

inhabitants of Merdita who had been surrounded by order of the Governor-General, for having destroyed the telegraph lines between Scutari and Monastir, instructions to the effect desired by the two Ambassadors had been given to the Governor-General.

In reply, the Governor-General has reported that a certain number of the inhabitants of Merdita have gone in the direction of Letch and Zadrima, and have committed excesses, such as thefts and other acts of brigandage, have rendered the road to Panha impracticable, and have furthermore cut the telegraph wires in that locality. Although the local authorities did all in their power to persuade them to desist, the sole result of the moderation shown towards them has been to encourage them in their threatening attitude. It has therefore been necessary to prevent any inhabitant of this locality from passing through the cordon of troops until he has submitted. This has brought about a speedy settlement of the affair.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
April 14, 1902.

No. 189.

Aide-Mémoires communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, April 16, 1902.

Renseignements émanés du Vali d'Andrinople.

TOUT récemment des troupes Bulgares sur la frontière du Casa de Kirdja-Ali et environ 200 habitants armés ont franchi la frontière sous le prétexte de régler la démarcation de la ligne-frontière; mais leur intention réelle était de provoquer des conflits avec les habitants Musulmans.

En conséquence, ordre a été donné au Caïmacan de Kirdja-Ali et au Commandant de Place d'augmenter le nombre des troupes sur la frontière et dans les block-houses.

Les habitants ont été avertis qu'ils ne devaient pas se mêler de ces sortes d'affaires. En meme temps un officier de l'état-major a été envoyé sur les lieux pour faire une enquête sur l'incident susmentionné.

Renseignements émanés du Vali de Kossovo.

A la suite d'une entente entre les Comités Serbes et Bulgares, des bandes Bulgaro-Serbes ont l'intention de faire irruption dans les territoires Ottomans et de franchir la ligne de démarcation près de Percheva. En outre, le Chef bien connu Doncho serait à la tête d'une bande de quarante à cinquante hommes et parcourrait dans le Caza de Petrich, qui est limitrophe des Balkans, les villages suivants: Padich, Diboutitche, Lachka, Soutedjer, et Osmanié. Le recrutement des bandes Bulgares progresserait: quelques-unes mêmes traverseraient les marchés, avec les drapeaux à la main. Elles recevraient des encouragements de la part du public ainsi que du Gouvernement Princier.

Ces nouvelles ont été données par le Caïmacan de Reditchta, qui a été invité à prendre des mesures, ce dont le Gouverneur-Général de Salonique a été informé.

(Translation.)

Information supplied by the Vali of Adrianople.

QUITE recently, some Bulgarian troops on the frontier of the Caza of Kirdja-Ali and about 200 armed inhabitants crossed the frontier on the plea of settling the boundary line; but their real intention was to bring about fighting with the Mussulman inhabitants.

Orders were consequently given to the Kaïmakam of Kirdja-Ali and the commander of the troops to increase the forces on the frontier and in the block-houses.

The inhabitants were told that they must not interfere in matters of this kind. At the same time, a staff officer was sent to the spot to hold an inquiry into the above-mentioned incident.

Information supplied by the Vali of Kossovo.

In consequence of an understanding between the Servian and Bulgarian Committees, Bulgaro-Servian bands intend to invade Ottoman territory, and to cross the frontier near Percheva. It is further stated that the well-known Chief, Doncho is at the head of a band of forty or fifty men, and is visiting the following villages in the Caza of Petrich, near the Balkans: Padich, Diboutitche, Lachka, Soutedjer, and Osmanie. It is said that progress is being made with the recruitment of Bulgarian bands, that some of them even cross the market places, with flags, and that they receive encouragement from the public and from the Prince's Government.

This information has been given by the Kaïmakam of Reditshta, who has been instructed to take measures. The Governor-General of Salonica has been informed.

No. 190.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 21.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 13, 1902.

ACCORDING to a telegram received to-day from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, an encounter has taken place at the village of Tshogentza, in the Kilkis district, between Turkish troops and a band of eighteen Bulgarians. Eight of the latter were killed, and some arms and papers were seized. There were no losses among the Turkish troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 191.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 19.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 13, 1902.

I HAVE not had an opportunity yet of seeing the Sublime Porte's Circular telegram of the 4th instant, to which Mr. Elliot refers in his telegram to your Lordship of the 12th instant, but I am advised by Colonel Maunsell that he considers the military measures taken by the Ottoman Government up to the present moment are fully and satisfactorily explained by the absolute necessity of strengthening the Turkish military forces, in order to suppress the insurrectionary bands and to safeguard the railways throughout Macedonia.

The attempt of the Bulgarian Government to attribute these measures to warlike intentions need, I think, only be regarded as a tactical political movement, which will gain no support from any one who is acquainted with the real situation of affairs either in Macedonia or Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 192.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 21.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, April* 15, 1902.

COUNT LAMSDORFF continues to regard as exaggerated the apprehensions aroused by reports of agitation and impending disturbances in Macedonia, and he does not think the present situation there is as menacing as it has been in some other years at this season.

His Excellency told me that he had been confirmed in this view by his conversations with M. Daneff, who had satisfied him as to the loyal co-operation of the Bulgarian Government in the maintenance of order and in the control of dangerous agitation in the Balkan States.

M. Daneff had apparently also confirmed Count Lamsdorff in his opinion that M. Sarafoff was at present entirely discredited with the Macedonian Committees, owing

to the disclosure of his money peculations, and that his baneful influence was no longer to be much dreaded.

Count Lamsdorff said to me that he had been very favourably impressed by M. Daneff's broad, calm, and practical views. He seemed to regard his presence at the head of the Government in Bulgaria as of great advantage at the present moment.

Count Lamsdorff also told me that it had been settled that Prince Ferdinand should pay a visit to the Russian Court at the end of May, immediately after M. Loubet's visit.

His Royal Highness had proposed this visit last year, being anxious to show the Emperor the plans for the monument to be erected in Sophia to the memory of the Emperor Alexander II, but it had been difficult to arrange an earlier date for this visit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. SCOTT.

No. 193.

Aide-mémoire communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, April 22, 1902.

LE nommé Dastaly Nicolas Andon, demeurant à Sérès, dans le Vilayet de Salonique, et appartenant au Comité Macédonien, ayant commis des agissements qui sont punis par la loi, a été arrêté récemment. Parmi ses papiers on a trouvé un plan imprimé en langue Bulgare et faisant connaître les projets des agitateurs concernant la région située près de la Rivière de Karassu, et contenant des instructions pour l'emploi des armes. Cet individu a été référé à la justice.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,
Londres, le 21 *Avril,* 1902.

(Translation.)

A CERTAIN Dastaly Nicolas Andon, residing at Serres, in the Vilayet of Salonica, and belonging to the Macedonian Committee, having committed acts which are punishable by law, was recently arrested. Among his papers was found a plan, printed in the Bulgarian language, showing the projects of the agitators in regard to the region situated near the River Karasu, and containing instructions for the use of arms. The man has been handed over to the judicial authorities.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
April 21, 1902.

No. 194.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 23.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 12, 1902.

AT a concert the night before last M. Ludskanoff, the Minister of the Interior and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, spoke to me of another Turkish Circular the substance of which purported to be published in the "Neue Freie Presse" of Vienna: the tone of it, he said, was so menacing as to cause him some uneasiness. Besides, he could not understand the motives of the Porte in issuing a series of Circulars accusing the Bulgarian Government of encouraging disorders, while in reality it was doing its utmost to prevent them. I said I knew nothing of the Circular but what I had seen in the paper; I believed the Bulgarian Government to be sincere in the desire to prevent disorders in Macedonia, so far as lay in their power, but I was not so sure that the orders they gave to this effect were carried out by their subordinates, of whose want of discipline, I regretted to say, I had long experience. It had come to my ears, I said, that rifles had been openly taken to the railway station at Rustchuk and dispatched from thence to Kustendil. M. Ludskanoff had not heard of it, and thought it incredible; but said so long as the rifles were on the railway they were in the hands of the Government.

This morning, at his reception, his Excellency told me it was true about the rifles having been dispatched from Rustchuk; they were some of those sold by the Govern-

ment in 1897 to the brothers Ivanoff; they are now on the railway, and will be stopped when they get to Sophia and handed over to the Ivanoffs. The law, he said, provided for the seizure of explosives, and cartridges had in consequence been seized at Dubnitsa and Kustendil, but it did not provide for the seizure of arms, and the Government were stretching a point when they prevented these rifles from being forwarded to their destination. But they had done more: they had given orders that the sale of arms was to be entirely prohibited in the three Prefectures of Sophia, Philippopili, and Kustendil.

The station-masters at Radomir (the present terminus of the Sophia-Kustendil Railway) and Tsaribrod had been removed to other places, on suspicion of favouring the Macedonian movement; and orders had been given to arrest two reserve officers who were known to organize bands; one of them, Saeff, had already been brought from Dubnitsa to Sophia, and would be interned at Gabrovo; the other, Stoyanoff, would be sent from Kustendil to Dobritch.

I remarked that the latter has lately been across the frontier upon what was supposed to be a pacific mission. M. Ludskanoff said it was better to be on the safe side, and prevent all incursions whatever. I expressed satisfaction at the action taken by the Bulgarian Government.

M. Ludskanoff then reverted to the terms of the Turkish Circular, as reproduced by the "Neue Freie Presse," and said that their similarity to those of a Circular issued by the Porte just before the outbreak of the war with Greece gave him a certain uneasiness, especially when he learned at the same time that military requisitions of carts, &c., were being made for the Adrianople Army Corps.

I replied that the circumstances were then quite different, the Greeks being the aggressors and making all kinds of military preparations, while the Bulgarian Government had not moved a man; and so long as they maintained that attitude and did their best to keep down the agitation on this side, I did not think they had any ground for alarm.

On leaving the Foreign Office I was shown a copy of the Circular in question by the Austro-Hungarian Agent, who had just received it by messenger. It is dated the 4th April.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 195.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 23.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 15, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant, authorizing me to join with my colleagues in impressing upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of discouraging all movements directed against Turkish rule in Macedonia, such as the alleged distribution of arms from Bulgarian depôts and the incendiary speeches delivered by Colonel Yankoff and others.

I cannot find that any of my colleagues have had recent instructions to speak in this sense, but the language of all of us to the Bulgarian Ministers is always to that effect, and has been more earnest than usual during the past few weeks. I myself had, only three days ago, the conversation with M. Ludskanoff, reported in my immediately preceding despatch of the 12th instant, in which he made so satisfactory a statement of the measures taken by the Government.

I shall, however, take an early opportunity of calling his attention to Colonel Yankoff's speeches, to which I omitted to allude on that occasion, and who, as it appears from the inclosed despatch from the British Vice-Consul at Rustchuk, has been lecturing at that place as well as at Widdin.

The Bulgarian Government quite recognize that the moment is not opportune for a rising in Macedonia, and are sincere in discouraging agitation in favour of one. But one of the difficulties they have in giving effect to their views is that they are not shared by all their subordinates, of whom some are Macedonians, and most sympathize with the Macedonian cause, so that it is not surprising if the orders of the Government are sometimes carried out in a half-hearted manner, or even evaded.

Since writing the above I have seen the Ottoman Commissioner, who told

me he had complained to M. Ludskanoff of Colonel Yankoff's incendiary speeches, and had been assured by him that if the Colonel made any more he would be arrested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 195.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Rustchuk, April* 12, 1902.

IN reply to your letter of the 10th instant, I have asked the Roumanian Consul as to the transport of rifles; he tells me that four carts were loaded from the office of the Macedonian Committee almost opposite the Consulate, and seen both by his dragoman and cavass, and I have no doubt of the fact; it is, however, explained by influential Bulgarians with whom I have spoken as a purely commercial tranaction, the brothers Ivanoff, of Sophia, having bought these rifles (Krinkas) from their respective proprietors at 3 fr. 60 c. each; these rifles were distributed amongst the Macedonians drilling in 1900 and 1901, to be their private property, and are now collected by Messrs. Ivanoff, not only here, but at Silistria, Varna, and many other places, and are conveyed to Sophia quite openly, though it is possible that their ultimate destination is Macedonia.

I have heard rumours of transport of arms by the Danube several times, but have been unable to obtain sufficiently reliable information to report; I think it probable that Messrs. Ivanoff's shipments from Silistria, Tutracan, &c., to Samovit, which is evidently the cheapest route for Sophia from these places, will account for these rumours, though my Austrian colleague was disposed to believe that it might be the rifles sold last year by the Roumanian Gouvernment to M. Turgea, which were now finding their way to Samovit; as to this, the Roumanian Consul assures me that all these rifles were shipped to Constantinople by sea.

Although many people have heard of or seen rifles in course of transport, no one seems to have heard of any transport of ammunition.

I am told that Colonel Yankoff, who was lecturing here last week in favour of the Macedonian Committee, was entertained at the Military Club, and was there asked by several officers what was done with all the money subscribed, to which he replied, "We possess the following arms:—

Männlichers	3,000
Henry-Martinis	2,800
Berdans	2,000
Krinkas	12,000"

The Mannlichers alone, if they cost, as I am told, 75 fr. each, would account for 225,000 fr. The other 17,000 might possibly average 4 fr., and account for another 68,000 fr.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

No. 196.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 21.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 18, 1902.

ON the 16th instant I had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch of the 12th, inclosing copy of a note from the Turkish Ambassador, dated the 11th April, relative to the alleged distribution of arms from the Bulgarian Government depôt at Küstendil for introduction into the neighbouring province of the Empire.

I immediately sent a copy of the note privately to M. Ludskanoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, saying I was not instructed to communicate it to him, but that I did so in order that he might know what was being said, and have the opportunity of contradicting it if it was not true, or of taking the necessary action if it was.

The following communiqué has since been published by the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency, whose offices are in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs:—

"Mendacious and designing reports of the activity of the Macedonian Committee and its relations with the Bulgarian Government have lately been circulated from Turkish sources with great assiduity. Thus, for example, it has been announced that a number of rifles of the 'Carnicaset' model have been distributed to the Macedonians out of the depôts of arms, although rifles of that model do not exist in Bulgaria. Another report states that a band which was shot down by the Turks was armed with Gras rifles, although it is well known that not Bulgaria, but Greece, is armed with those weapons. The groundlessness of these assertions is best shown by the following facts: The pursuit and arrest of those agents of the Macedonian Committee who have been guilty of improper proceedings; the warning addressed by the Government to the Supreme Macedonian Committee in Sophia that it will be dissolved if it lays itself open to suspicion of such proceedings; the prohibition of the sale of arms in all places adjoining the Turkish frontier; the confiscation of a great number of arms in the district of Sophia by the Mayor of the capital. In the face of these facts it requires great audacity still to assert that the Bulgarian Government distributes rifles from its depôts to the Macedonian bands."

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 197.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 23, 1902.*

THE French Ambassador told me to-day that the French Government shared the opinions which I had expressed to him on the 9th instant as to our attitude in reference to affairs in Macedonia.

They thought that the case was one in which we need not shrink from giving good advice both at Constantinople and at Sophia, but that we should be extremely careful not to encourage the Porte to take repressive measures of too severe a character.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 198.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 25.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, April* 21, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that on the afternoon of Saturday, the 19th instant, a meeting of students was announced to take place in a public hall to denounce the attitude of the Macedonian Committee and of the Bulgarian Government in connection with the consecration of Mgr. Firmilian as Bishop of Uskub. A large number attended, but were informed by the police that as sufficient notice of the meeting had not been given, it could not take place.

The students then adjourned to the streets, but not before they had been addressed by M. Liuba Zifcovitch, a well-known Deputy, who complimented them on their patriotism, against which, he said, the threats of the Bulgarians would be of no avail. They then paraded the streets, where they hooted M. Passitch, a well-known but unpopular statesman. Before the Palace they made patriotic demonstrations, and the King and Queen came out on to the balcony. They subsequently went to the house of the Metropolitan, who addressed them in feeling terms, saying that he could die happy, as he felt that the interests of Servia would be safe in their hands.

After some further speeches had been delivered at the statue of Prince Michael, where a telegram was read from the students of Agram approving the objects of the meeting, the assembly, which had been quite orderly, dispersed.

Some sensation was caused later in the evening by a report that Mgr. Firmilian had been murdered, which doubtless originated in the fact, which is now generally known, that his life has been threatened.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 199.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 28.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 18, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica giving a very interesting report on the condition of the vilayets in his Consular district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 199.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, April* 11, 1902.

I CONSIDER it most important to give some general details with regard to the real situation in the vilayet under my consular jurisdiction, which all papers describe as exceptionally precarious.

There is no doubt that the Bulgarian population of certain villages has had, in some cases, to submit to ill-treatment and violence at the hands of the Turkish authorities. But in all such cases it was in consequence of the Bulgarian peasants harbouring, or siding with, the bands, either of their own free will or as the only means of saving their lives.

The only instance worth reporting which has been brought to my notice for some time are details related to me at the beginning of December as coming from two priests and three women connected with the expedition of the Kaïmakam of Vodena to the village of Sborsko in September. The women said they had been violated by the native Moslems accompanying the Governor, and the priests, one of whom still suffered from a swollen foot, that it was the result of the treatment to which he had been subjected.

They further stated that many of the peasants had been similarly treated, and that the Kaïmakam had extorted about 500*l.* from them, &c. I communicated this information to Tewfik Bey, who ordered an immediate inquiry. Nothing could be proved against the subordinate authorities, but as a consequence of the Vali's prompt action, no subsequent complaints of a similar nature have come in from that or any other quarter.

About the same time, the Bulgarians complained to me that the notorious Turkish brigand Kiazim had, at a few hours' distance from Salonica, waylaid and plundered Bulgarian peasants returning to their villages in Kilkish, wounding nine of them. I again communicated with the Vali, who took fresh measures, and not long after, Kiazim's body was found in the bed of a river, without any clue being ever obtained as to how he came by his death. But whatever the cause of his death, I have since heard of no complaints about Turkish brigandage, and from that date to the beginning of this month, *i.e.*, for four months, I have received no complaints whatever on the part of Bulgarians, who, as a rule, do not fail to come to me with an account of their grievances.

The insecurity, which exists now to a certain extent, is caused by just those people who complain most of it. In fact, besides the permanent and inherent defects of the Turkish Administration, there is nothing at this moment to justify the anxiety manifested in the press so far as the Turkish population is concerned, Rayahs on the whole being left unmolested. But Bulgarian bands, which had for a time interrupted their murders, have begun again to assassinate Christians of other races, as well as Moslems. Hitherto neither of these parties has retaliated on a scale worthy of notice, but their position is becoming very precarious, and the Greeks, Servians, and Vlachs, as well as Moslems, are complaining in emphatic terms of the proceedings of the Bulgarian bands and of the consequent behaviour of the Bulgarian population.

I think that the most efficient way of giving a complete and impartial idea of the present grounds of complaint of the Bulgarians is to report the cases, together with the dates at which they were related, in the very words in which the Bulgarians themselves narrated them to me.

April 4.—Seven women from Lower Poroïa appeared before the Vali and complained that about twenty men and two women from their village had, two months ago, been transported to Demir-Hissar, the seat of the Government, and detained there, without, however, being imprisoned, in consequence of a certain Alexis, a native of their village, having taken the leadership of a band, and that about seventy of the inhabitants of the village, frightened by this measure, had fled in different directions. They admitted that the two women were Alexis' wife and mother, and that the twenty men were all more or less related to him. The Vali told me that the men and women had all been allowed home before the deputation of seven women had applied to him.

Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Theodorides replied on the 10th instant to my request for information that, in consequence of a denunciation, the Kaïmakam of Demir-Hissar went to Poroïa and ascertained for certain that Alexis, who was at the head of a Bulgarian band, was in constant touch with his relations and friends, to the number of about twelve, who provided him with victuals. The Kaïmakam, therefore, conveyed them to Demir-Hissar, until some decision had been arrived at concerning them. Mr. Theodorides adds that the statement that seventy peasants, frightened by this measure, had fled in all directions is entirely without foundation.

April 4.—Three Bulgarian peasants having disappeared under suspicious circumstances from Ghevgheli, the authorities, notified by the relatives, arrested some thirty-three Bulgarians three weeks ago on suspicion, of whom thirty from Ghevgheli and two or three from neighbouring villages. Their relatives complain that they have not yet been tried. The Vali, who at my requests asked for explanations from Ghevgheli, has not yet received an answer.

April 4.—In consequence of the murder at Doïran of a Serbophile Greek, about thirty Bulgarians were arrested to give evidence; of these, three, imprisoned on suspicion, were innocent. The murder took place on the 30th March, and at the time when complaint was made to me—the morning of the 4th instant—the prisoners had already been released, with the exception of three, who, with five others, are supposed to have committed the crime. The facts of the case are these: A certain Patrioti, a Greek by origin, but in the Servian service as a kind of school inspector in the Caza of Doïran, enjoyed a degree of influence which made him obnoxious to the Bulgarian Committees. An ineffectual attempt was made to murder him last year. On the 30th ultimo, however, at 6 P.M., he was surrounded in the market place of Doïran by eight Bulgarians, who gagged and pinioned him, stabbed him nine times in the back, and then nearly severed his head from his body. The Turkish authorities arrested thirty of the inhabitants living in the vicinity of the scene of the crime, and held an inquiry, when, as already stated, only three suspects were detained in prison.

The Greek and Servian Consulates expressed themselves in the strongest terms on this crime, and I learn that the impression produced at Doïran is such that Christians (Bulgarians excepted) and Moslems close the doors of their houses at sunset. Thus the methods employed by the Macedonian Committees are developing into terrorism of all the races in this district, including even a considerable number of Bulgarians themselves.

April 11.—Four women from the village of Novo Selo, Caza of Strumnitza, came to complain that about thirty of their fellow villagers, including their husbands, were being kept in the prisons of Salonica without trial, during which time three of them had died.

There is no doubt that prisoners are frequently kept a long time awaiting their trial, but, on the one hand, cases have often to be postponed owing to the contradictory statements made by witnesses from one day to the other, which entails a delay necessary to the determining of the truth; and also, on the other, owing to the press of work at the Courts.

Since the arrival, however, of Hakki Bey, the new Procureur-Général, a Cretan who has had experience of political trials in his native island, cases have been proceeded with with an expedition hitherto unknown, which has satisfied even the Bulgarians. Of the 139 prisoners who, according to memorandums received here from Bulgarians at the end of November, were brought down from Stroumintza, 6 were sentenced to five years' hard labour, and only 32 are still awaiting their trial.

I shall abstain from comment on the other complaints preferred by the Bulgarians. The facts in these cases speak for themselves.

These, then—and no other—are the instances of disorder in this vilayet, which

are represented in the press as endangering the security of European Turkey, as they undoubtedly tend to do; but the authors of the disorders are neither Moslems nor any Rayahs, but the Bulgarian brigand bands and the population they influence.

The present agitation in the vilayets under my jurisdiction is, so far as the Macedonian Committees are concerned, temporary and not likely to succeed any better later on if it should fail now, as is probable, unless the subordinate Turkish authorities commit some great blunder. But the disappearance of the bands will not do away with the permanent injustice, corruption, and maladministration, arising chiefly from the state of the finances, which leaves a free field to political intrigues.

Without touching on other reforms, the regular payment of the official salaries, police, and gendarmes' pay, &c., would do away with more than two-thirds of the present abuses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 200.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 28.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 22, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a summary of the principal events which have occurred in European Turkey during the past three weeks, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 200.

Summary of Reports from His Majesty's Consuls in European Turkey.

Salonica District.

A NEW Vali, Hassan Fehmi Pasha, has been appointed to Salonica in succession to Tewfik Bey, whose recall is reported with regret by Sir A. Biliotti. He describes him as an honest, intelligent, and well-disposed official, who has taken great pains in the execution of his duties, but who lacks the experience necessary to govern so difficult a province as Salonica. He was always ready to investigate cases brought to his knowledge by the foreign Consuls, and had done much to check the abuses of his subordinates—a fact which was recognized even by the Bulgarians. Sir A. Biliotti, April 1, 1902.

Sir A. Biliotti reports at the end of last month the Bulgarian Committees were displaying great activity, and would stop at nothing which could promote a movement; but he hardly anticipated a rising *en masse*. At present, however, the system of patrolling the disturbed districts by regular troops lately adopted by the authorities seems to have produced good results, and at Constantinople the general impression is that the danger of serious disturbance this year is in great measure averted. Ibid., April 2, 1902.

The affair of Motol (see summary of the 2nd April) has been investigated by the Commission appointed by the late Vali. They report that the native Moslems did not join the troops nor enter the village, and that there was no looting or outrage on women. The bodies of the three Bulgarians killed were found half-an-hour distant from the scene of the fight and each had but a single wound; but while there is no doubt that these three men had been carrying arms on the day of the affray, the Commission had not enough evidence to show whether they were permanent members of the band or whether, as happens frequently, they had joined it temporarily. The statements of the wounded survivor were hopelessly conflicting. Ibid., April 12, 1902.

An affray with eighteen Bulgarians took place on the 10th April at Tchogentza, also in the Kilkish district, near Kilindri; eight Bulgars were killed, of whom two had taken no part in the murder of Patrioti at Doiran (see inclosure in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 18th April), and seven rifles were captured; the troops had no losses but the Moslem Superintendent of the Tchogentza farm, and two of his men were killed. Ibid., April 13, 1902.

Monastir District.

On the 7th April, at Kadinoselo (Kadin Keui), one and a-half hours south of Perlepe (Prilip), a party of seven Bulgarians, "Comitadjis," whilst holding a meeting to discuss propagandist matters with two priests and several of the villagers, were surprised by the gendarmerie, who succeeded in surrounding the house. A four hours' fight ensued, and after throwing a dynamite bomb, which failed to explode, the besieged made a sortie and were all killed. It is thought that four committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of the Turks. Of the seven Bulgars, two came from Ochrida, two from Perlepe, two from Bulgaria, and one from Tikvesh. One of the two Ochrida men was a schoolmaster, Patsie, who five years ago murdered Guirdan, the Servian leader at Ochrida, and since his release three years ago has been an active propagandist. Among the other was Karanjouloff, the brother of the assassin of the Bulgarian Minister of Justice. A large part of the villagers of Cadinoselo have been imprisoned, and an inquiry into their complicity will be held.

Uskb.

Mr. Fontana, March 31, 1902.

The appearance of the large band of sixty Bulgarians, said to be under the leadership of a Major of the Bulgarian Army, has caused Hamdi Pasha to leave for Kochana or the Malesh district. (In speaking to Mr. Elliot, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs at Sophia denied the possibility of the existence of such a band: Mr. Elliot's despatch of the 7th April.) Other smaller Bulgarian parties are patrolling the country between Ishtib and the frontier.

A band of twelve Bulgarians was surprised by the gendarmerie near Kochana at the end of last month; eight were killed, and the other four surrendered, while one zaptieh was slain.

Adrianople.

Mr. Block's Memorandum, April 8, 1902.

The Foreign Minister has received a telegram from the Vali of Adrianople, dated the 6th April, that four Bulgarian brigands crossed the frontier near Kirk-Kilissé, in the Keukjeyiz district, about two hours from the frontier. They seized four Moslems and one child, and stabbed them to death. These brigands probably belong to the band of Uskupli-Yovan, who is at present at Shekinjihe, in Southern Roumelia, with his Macedonian followers.

Albania.

Mr. Fontana, April 8, 1902.

The prolonged absence at Constantinople of Akif or "Hakki" Bey, an Albanian Notable of Novi Bazar, has led to some disturbance, his friends believing that he was being detained. Akif had used his influence in the Novi Bazar district to oppose the payment of the tithe, the only tax to which the Albanians thereabouts had for a long time past submitted, but he allowed himself to be persuaded to go to the capital by the Kaïmakam, Kiazim Bey, who held out hopes that he would receive a decoration. His partisans and a certain Issa Boletinatz, a celebrated brigand of Mitrovitza, began to agitate for his return, with the result that the markets of Novi Bazar, Mitrovitza, and Sienitza were closed. On the receipt, however, of a telegram from Constantinople stating that Akif had started on his way back, business was resumed on the 8th April.

Mr. Fontana describes Kiazim Bey as an intriguer, who sometimes tries to gain credit by reporting the disturbances which have existed only in his imagination. It is rumoured in Uskub that he is to be replaced by Jemal Bey, Kaïmakam of Kiuprulu.

Ibid., April 14 1902.

An agitation of a different nature has brought about the closing of the market at Ferisovitch also. The Albanians there demand that the district shall be raised to a Kaïmakamlik, which they think would benefit the trade and general prosperity of the place. The scheme is opposed by the people of Prishtina, and the Mutessarif and other civil functionaries of that place have gone to Ferisovitch to restore order.

There is a report of further fighting between the Albanians and the troops at Ipek, but Mr. Fontana has not been able to verify it.

Mr. Fontana thinks that these are only the natural outcome of the childish petulance of the Albanians, which is encouraged by the indulgence shown by the Turkish Administration, and need not necessarily be thought to foreshadow any serious political troubles.

A proposal for an Albanian rapprochement with Greece is reported by Sir A. Biliotti as follows:— Sir A. Biliotti, April 5, 1902.

"Two Moslem Albanian Chiefs, Gheghs, who had been specially sent from Ipek, reported to the Greek Consul at Uskub, for the information of his Government, that they were thoroughly disgusted with the political intrigues of Austria, Italy, and Servia, which had for their entire object merely the absorption of Albania, and that after mature reflection they had come to the conclusion that the combination which offered them the greatest security for preserving their national entity was a kind of federation with Greece, each of the two countries preserving its autonomy and being united politically like Austria and Hungary.

"I understand that the Albanians propose to include not only Lower and Upper Albania, but also the whole of Epirus, and even Macedonia.

"They suggested also that a Greek Consul should be appointed to Mitrovitza, in order that the Greeks and Albanians might exchange through him their ideas on the object in view.

"It appears that the two Ghegh Envoys bear letters from the principal Albanian Chiefs now in Constantinople agreeing to the proposed combination."

Mirdite Country.

The Mirdites are now quiet, though they still demand the return of their Chief, Prenk Bib Doda, from exile. The burning of a Mirdite church at Mied, which is ascribed to the Moslems, has, however, caused some uneasiness. The Mirdite priests are doing their best to hold their people in check, but the Moslems are afraid of reprisals, and are urging the Vali to send for more troops for their protection. Up to the present, the Governor seems to have acted with firmness towards the Albanians, but there are threats of drawing up a Mazbata to be sent to Constantinople demanding his dismissal for having shown partiality to the Christians.

No. 201.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 28.)

My Lord, *Sophia, April* 21, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report that the day before yesterday, at the weekly reception of M. Ludskanoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, I told him that I had seen the communiqué of the Telegraphic Agency contradicting the Turkish assertion of the distribution of arms from Bulgarian depôts to Macedonian incursionists, and that while the answer, that arms of the types named are unknown in Bulgaria, was a good answer, I must remind him that on another occasion a band of sixteen men armed with Mannlichers had been killed or captured near Palanka, and the rifles brought into Uskub. (I was referring to the case reported by Mr. Fontana in a despatch transmitted to your Lordship with Sir Nicholas O'Conor's despatch of the 25th March.)

His Excellency said he had himself been struck by this statement (as to the authenticity of which I told him there could be no doubt), and he would cause inquiry to be made as to whether it was possible for these rifles to have been abstracted from Government stores. He might, however, tell me a rumour he had heard, but for which he could not vouch, that Boris Sarafoff or some one on his behalf had visited the works at Steyer, and had bought some 2,000 rifles, rejected by other purchasers on account of trifling defects. I afterwards informed the Austro-Hungarian Agent of this statement of the Minister's.

I then asked M. Ludskanoff if it was true, as stated in the communiqué, that he had threatened the Macedonian Committee with dissolution. He replied that it was, and that the threat would be carried out if the Committee in any way transgressed the bounds of legality.

He said that the rifles sent from Rustchuk for the brothers Ivanoff had been delivered at their store, which had then been closed and sealed, a pretext for this action

having been found in the fact that the register of sales of arms, which the law requires, had not been properly kept by them.

In reply to a question from me about Colonel Yankoff, who, he said, is an officer of the Reserve, M. Ludskanoff stated that some of his speeches of which complaint was made appeared to have been delivered at private meetings, and could therefore not be prevented; but the Colonel was being watched, and if he made any incendiary harangue at a public meeting, he would be at once arrested.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of another communiqué published by the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency, stating that the Bulgarian Commercial Agents in Turkey have been instructed by Circular to urge the Bulgarian populations to remain quiet, and that in sending copies of this Circular to its Diplomatic Agents the Government has instructed them to point out to the Powers that its endeavours to preserve the tranquillity of the Balkan Peninsula will be fruitless so long as the situation in Turkey is not improved.

The Turkish Government will perhaps be less gratified by the exhortation to the Bulgarian populations than offended by the considerations upon which it is based, and by the appeal to the Powers against its maladministration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 201.

Communiqué published by the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency.

CONSIDÉRANT que tout mouvement révolutionnaire en Macédoine est pernicieux pour la population Bulgare de cette province, ainsi que pour les intérêts de la Principauté et pour la cause nationale Bulgare en général, le Gouvernement Princier a adressé à ses Agents Commerciaux en Turquie une Circulaire attirant leur attention sur ce danger, leur communiquant sa ferme décision de ne permettre dans la Principauté aucune action ayant pour but de provoquer des désordres dans l'Empire voisin et les invitant à conseiller la population Bulgare de rester calme. En envoyant copie de cette Circulaire à ses Agents Diplomatiques, le Cabinet de Sophia les a invités d'attirer l'attention des Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin sur le fait que les mesures du Gouvernement Bulgare, pour le maintien de la paix et de la tranquillité dans la presqu'île des Balkans, seront inefficaces tant que des mesures ne seront pas prises pour améliorer la situation en Turquie.

Sophia, le 19 *Avril,* 1902.

(Translation.)

CONSIDERING that any revolutionary movement in Macedonia is injurious to the Bulgarian population of that province, as well as to the interests of the Principality and generally to the Bulgarian national cause, the Prince's Government has addressed to its Commercial Agents in Turkey a Circular calling their attention to this danger, informing them of its firm resolve not to permit in the Principality any action which aims at causing disturbances in the neighbouring Empire, and instructing them to advise the Bulgarian population to remain calm. The Bulgarian Government has sent copies of this Circular to its Diplomatic Agents, with instructions to point out to the Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin that the measures of the Bulgarian Government for the preservation of peace and tranquillity in the Balkan Peninsula will remain ineffectual until steps are taken to improve the condition of Turkey.

Sophia, April 19, 1902.

No. 202.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 28.)

(Extract.) *Vienna, April* 24, 1902.

COUNT LÜTZOW told me yesterday that the latest accounts received from the Austro-Hungarian Agents in the Balkan countries had again become less reassuring, and a fear seemed to be growing that Sunday next, which is the Russian Orthodox Easter Day, would be taken advantage of to produce a general disturbance. His

Excellency said it was impossible to know whether this fear was founded on anything more solid than previous reports of the same nature as to other dates now happily passed over without the promised rising. He could therefore only say that this fresh rumour was now current, and that it obtained credence in certain quarters.

No. 203.

Memorandum communicated to Anthopoulo Pasha, April 30, 1902.

DESPATCHES have been received from His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Sophia, which contain information in regard to some of the matters mentioned verbally by the Turkish Ambassador to Lord Lansdowne on the 9th instant, or referred to in his Excellency's note of the 11th instant.

The Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency at Sophia recently published a communiqué stating that there is no foundation for the report that rifles of the Carnicaset model have been distributed to the Macedonians out of the Government depôt at Kustendil, or for the report that Bulgarian brigands, who were shot by the Turkish troops, were found to be armed with Gras rifles. It is pointed out that rifles of these two models are not used by the Bulgarian army. The communiqué declares that the groundlessness of such reports is shown by the following facts: the pursuit and arrest of those agents of the Macedonian Committee who have been guilty of improper proceedings; the warning addressed by the Government to the Supreme Macedonian Committee at Sophia that it will be dissolved if it lays itself open to suspicion of such proceedings; the prohibition of the sale in arms in all places adjoining the Turkish frontier; and the confiscation of a great number of arms by the Mayor of Sophia.

M. Ludskanoff, the Bulgarian Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, assured Mr. Elliot in conversation that his Government would certainly carry out their threat to dissolve the Macedonian Committee if it in any way transgressed the bounds of legality.

Mr. Elliot having alluded to the proceedings of Colonel Yankoff, M. Ludskanoff stated that he belonged to the Reserve; that some of his speeches of which complaint was made appeared to have been delivered at private meetings, and that they could, therefore, not be prevented; but that if they held any incendiary language at a public meeting he would at once be arrested.

On the 19th instant a further communiqué was published by the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency, stating that the Bulgarian Commercial Agents in Turkey had been instructed by Circular to urge the Bulgarian population to remain quiet. The communiqué added, however, that in sending copies of this Circular to the Bulgarian Diplomatic Agents, the Government had instructed them to point out to the Powers that its endeavours to preserve the tranquillity of the Balkan Peninsula would be ineffectual until measures were taken to improve the situation in Turkey.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1902.

No. 204.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 30, 1902.*

I TOLD the Turkish Ambassador to-day, with reference to his conversation with me on the 9th instant, recorded in my despatch of that date, as to affairs in Macedonia, that I had made inquiries as to some of the occurrences of which he had spoken to me, or which had been mentioned in his Excellency's note of the 11th instant.

I was now able to communicate to him a Memorandum embodying information which I had received from His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Sophia in regard to the alleged distribution of arms to the Macedonians out of the Government depôt at Kustendil, the proceedings of Colonel Yankoff, and other matters referred to by his Excellency.

A copy of the Memorandum is inclosed.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

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* No. 203.

No. 205.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 12.)

My Lord,. *Vienna, May* 8, 1902.

I HAD some conversation yesterday on Balkan affairs with Count Lützow, who is in charge of the Imperial Foreign Department during the absence of Count Goluchowski at Budapest.

His Excellency said that the excitement appeared everywhere to be dying out, and there was now good reason to think that this season, like its predecessors, would pass without a rising, provided, of course, something now unforeseen does not suddenly arise.

A few days ago I had a short conversation with my Russian colleague, who then told me he was anxious to go for a month to St. Petersburgh, but that he would not start till things looked more quiet in the Balkans. He has now decided to leave for Russia the day after to-morrow, which seems to prove that he also considers that there is no prospect of disturbance for the moment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 206.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 12.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May* 8, 1902.

THERE appears to be no reason to anticipate, from the information available here, that the difficulties in Macedonia are about to lead to a general rising of the Christian population. The excitement arising out of the question of the Bishopric of Uskub no longer presents such a threatening aspect as it did a short time since, and although the consecration of Bishop Firmilian has not taken place, both the Servian Government and the Russian Minister appeared to be quite satisfied that it will take place shortly.

When I last saw Dr. Vouitch a week ago, he took credit for the attitude of the Servian Government as having largely contributed to the peaceful turn—if that is not too strong an expression—which affairs in Macedonia have taken. The Bulgarian element, he said, is not sufficiently strong to create serious disturbances without assistance from the Servian element, and this they have not succeeded in obtaining. The Firmilian incident appears, moreover, to have roused their petty jealousies so that the mutual hatred of Turkish rule by which it must be supposed they are both actuated does not appear to be sufficiently strong to overcome the distrust which they entertain of each other, at least to the extent necessary to enable them to act in concert.

There is certainly no desire on the part of the Servian Government to provoke hostilities, and they have shown their anxiety to prevent the usual frontier disturbances, by an order alluded to by Dr. Vouitch, which has since been published in the official Gazette, prohibiting the importation or exportation of arms, and their wish to stand aloof from the revolutionary enterprises is also shown by the failure of Sarafoff to enlist their sympathies.

There have been fewer complaints than usual of outrages committed on the Servian population in "Old Servia," and the general impression prevails in official quarters that the time is now approaching when the danger for serious disturbances will be over for this year.

There may be cases of outrage, but nothing to justify the fear of a general revolution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 207.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 15.)

My Lord, *Athens, May 7, 1902.*

SIR NICHOLAS O'CONOR informed me last month that certain proposals had been reported to have been made to the Greek Government by leading Albanians, and I took an opportunity of telling M. Zaïmis that rumours of the kind, with a view no doubt of discrediting Greece, were current, and that I trusted his Government was showing prudence.

His Excellency said that frequent overtures had been made to Greek Agents by Albanian Chiefs, which had received not the slightest encouragement from him whatever, neither did he believe that from any society or individuals in Greece any secret exchanges of political views were being carried on with the Albanians.

The Turkish Minister also assured me that he did not believe there were now any intrigues going on between Greek societies and Albanians.

M. Zaïmis added that the Greeks, who have been most palpably guiltless of any agitation of late in Macedonia, have been accused by the Slavs.

As regards Macedonia, his Excellency considers himself well informed, and trusted the reign of terror in parts of that province was now diminishing; but as regards Albania he was comparatively ignorant, and did not clearly understand the causes of the present effervescence there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 208.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 21.)

My Lord, *Sophia, May 14, 1902.*

A FEW days ago a band of incursionists was observed by the Bulgarian frontier guard on their way to cross into Macedonia, near Kustendil. On being called upon to surrender, they fired, and a skirmish ensued, which ended in the capture of the band, one of whom was killed and several wounded. One gendarme is also reported to have been killed and one wounded.

At Kustendil about 100 rifles and 6,000 cartridges have been confiscated, and at Radomir a number of empty bombs have been seized, which were on their way to Dubnitsa to be filled.

A memorial service was held at Sophia on the 11th instant in honour of some four-and-twenty patriots who have recently lost their lives in Macedonia. Speeches were made, but the proceedings were orderly, and no demonstration took place which called for the intervention of the police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 209.

Aide-mémoire communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, June 4, 1902.

Communication de son Altesse le Grand Vizir au Haridjié, le 7 Mai, 1902.

LE Haut Commissaire Impérial fait savoir que les mesures récemment prises par le Gouvernement Bulgare contre les agitateurs ayant affecté plus que tout autre moyen Savaroff et son parti, ceux-ci ont résolu de convoquer un Congrès pour fusionner les différents Comités, et dans ce but ont envoyé des émissaires à Tornavo, Philibé, Varna, et Sophia. Cette nouvelle est confirmée par l'un des journaux paraissant en Bulgarie.

Bien qu'il ignore jusqu'à quel point des résolutions prises par les Comités de Sophia pourraient réussir et jusqu'à quelle limite le Gouvernement Bulgare les laisserait agir dans le cas où ce Congrès serait décidé, il ne manquera pas de prendre toutes les mesures pour en empêcher la réunion. Il ajoute que les Comités sont très actifs en

ce moment pour répandre leur propagande néfaste. Dans ces circonstances le Grand Vizir invite le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à communiquer cet état de choses aux Puissances.

Communication du Ministre de l'Intérieur au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, le 12 Mai, 1902.

Des bandes du Comité Bulgare fréquentent les villages habités par les Chrétiens pour faire de la propagande et elles n'hésitent pas à tuer les personnes qui s'opposent à leurs agissements néfastes.

Dans le Vilayet de Monastir ces bandes ont parmi les personnes qui refusaient de leur donner de l'argent tué deux habitants et aussi le fils du guide du Capitaine Mukhtar, qui était aux environs du village à garder ses moutons. Ce malheureux fut pris, entraîné jusqu'à la porte de sa propre maison, où il a été égorgé; son frère a été également mis à mort par un des rebelles que le sort avait désigné pour ce meurtre.

Communication du Ministre de l'Intérieur au Haridjié, le 14 Mai, 1902.

Les nommés Cambir et Sherif appartenant au village d'Isnova, district de Radovitza, qui allaient voir leurs enfants à Djuma-Bala, ont été rencontrés pendant la nuit par une trentaine de Bulgares près des Balkans de Karagouslé. On leur a lié les mains et ils ont été emmenés aux Balkans de Sarigouslé. Là Sherif a été mis à mort et Cambir grièvement blessé. Ce fait ayant été porté à la connaissance des autorités Impériales par le blessé, on a envoyé immédiatement un détachement de soldats et on a pris d'autres mesures pour s'emparer des coupables.

Londres, le 4 Juin, 1902.

(Translation.)

Communication from His Highness the Grand Vizier to the Haridjié, May 7, 1902.

THE Imperial High Commissioner reports that the measures recently taken by the Bulgarian Government against the agitators having affected Sarafoff and his party more than any previous step, these latter have resolved to convoke a Congress to combine all the different Committees, and, with this object in view, have sent emissaries to Tirnovo, Philippopoli, Varna, and Sophia. This report is confirmed by one of the Bulgarian newspapers.

Although he does not know how far the decisions of the Committee at Sophia are likely to be carried out, and to what extent the Bulgarian Government would let them act should the Congress be decided upon, he will not fail to take every step to prevent the meeting. He adds that the Committees are very active at present in spreading their mischievous propaganda. In these circumstances the Grand Vizier requests the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to communicate the state of affairs to the Powers.

Communication from the Minister of the Interior to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, May 12, 1902.

Bands belonging to the Bulgarian Committee frequent villages inhabited by Christians, in order to spread their propaganda, and do not hesitate to kill those who oppose their mischievous agitation.

In the Vilayet of Monastir these bands have killed, among those who refused to give them money, two inhabitants, and also the son of Captain Mukhtar's guide, who was tending his sheep in the neighbourhood of the village. This poor fellow was taken, dragged to the door of his house, and there murdered; his brother, also, was put to death by one of the rebels chosen by lot to carry out the deed.

Communication from the Minister of the Interior to the Haridjié, May 14, 1902.

Two men, named Cambir and Sherif, of the village of Isnova, in the Radovitza district, going to see their children at Djuma Bala, were met at night by some thirty Bulgarians, near the Karaguslé Balkans. Their hands were bound, and they were

taken to the Sariguslé Balkans, where Sherif was put to death and Cambir severely wounded. News of this was brought by the wounded man to the Imperial authorities, who immediately dispatched a detachment of soldiers and took other steps to capture the culprits.

London, June 4, 1902.

No. 210.

Memorandum communicated by Anthopoulo Pasha, June 4, 1902.

LE Gouvernement Impérial ayant attiré la bienveillante attention des Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin sur la gravité de la situation créée par les agissements du Comité Macédonien, celles-ci avaient bien voulu faire auprès du Gouvernement Bulgare les démarches nécessaires en vue de la cessation de ces agissements. Quoiqu'un certain effet ait suivi ces démarches, il nous revient que le dit Comité se reforme à Sophia avec la tolérance de la Principauté et s'apprête à poursuivre, comme par le passé, son but repréhensible. Tant qu'un Comité de ce genre existera en Bulgarie et prendra à tâche de fomenter des troubles parmi les populations Bulgares des provinces voisines, il ne sera pas possible de sauvegarder la parfaite tranquillité de ces pays. Le Gouvernement Impérial, tout en déclinant d'ores et déjà la responsabilité des conséquences que peut engendrer le travail malfaisant du Comité en question, espère que le Gouvernement Britannique voudra bien faire à Sophia les démarches les plus énergiques pour amener la Principauté à le dissoudre complètement et faire supprimer ainsi l'élément néfaste dont l'existence est une cause perpétuelle de trouble et d'incidents regrettables.

Londres, le 4 *Juin*, 1902.

(Translation.)

ON the Imperial Government calling the attention of the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin to the gravity of the situation created by the agitation of the Macedonian Committee, they were so good as to make the necessary representations to the Bulgarian Government with a view to the cessation of these proceedings. Although these representations were not without effect, we learn that the said Committee is being reformed at Sophia with the tacit assent of the Principality, and is preparing to pursue its reprehensible object as formerly. So long as a Committee of this kind exists in Bulgaria, and has as its object the fomenting of disturbances among the Bulgarian population of the neighbouring provinces, it will be impossible to secure the complete tranquillity of those countries. While declining, for once and all, to be responsible for the consequences which the mischievous activity of the said Committee may bring about, the Imperial Government hopes that the British Government will be willing to make most energetic representations at Sophia to cause the Principality to dissolve it completely, and thus to suppress the mischievous element whose existence is a perpetual cause of disturbance and regrettable incidents.

London, June 4, 1902.

No. 211.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 7, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copies of two Memoranda which have been communicated to me by the Turkish Ambassador* in regard to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committees in Bulgaria and of their emissaries in the Turkish provinces.

I should wish to be furnished with your observations on the statements made in these papers, and on the request which is made by the Porte, that the Great Powers should press the Bulgarian Government to dissolve the Macedonian Committee.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

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* Nos. 209 and 210.

No. 212.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 9.)

My Lord, *Sophia, May* 28, 1902.

A MEETING of the representatives of the Macedonian Societies which disapprove of the policy of the present Committee was summoned to take place at Sophia on the 24th instant, for the purpose of bringing about the resignation of the Committee and the election of a fresh one. As, however, only 8 out of 159 Societies sent Delegates, the meeting fell through, and the disaffected will have to reserve their efforts for the assembly of the ordinary Macedonian Congress at the expiration of the Committee's mandate in July.

The event seems to corroborate the opinion more than once expressed to me by Bulgarian Ministers, that Sarafoff has lost influence in the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 213.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 9.)

My Lord, *Pera, June* 3, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith Mr. Young's monthly summary on events in Macedonia during May.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 213.

Report on Events in Macedonia during May 1902.

BOTH public and private opinion seems to have agreed that the considerable military activity developed by the Ottoman Government will again repress the insurrectionary forces in Macedonia, and the events of last month have produced no evidence to the contrary. To judge from reports, the country has been flooded with troops; every bridge, ford, railway cutting, and tunnel guarded; every line and road patrolled, and every village in the disturbed areas held by garrisons of from ten men upwards. The danger of too great a dispersion of force becoming evident when several of these small posts had been overpowered and disarmed by villagers who resented their depredations, the troops are now concentrated in larger bodies. This again has the disadvantage of impoverishing the villages where they are quartered and of driving the villagers into the hills.

The general result of the campaign against the bands, as reported in a Greek paper, is that seven, and those the largest, have been destroyed or dispersed; the number of insurgents still in the field is estimated at 600.

On the 28th April a Turkish force of about 500 regulars and irregulars tried to force the "Scala," a rocky defile, well known as a stronghold of the Committees of the Struma Valley. The result of the fighting is uncertain; but it seems probable that the band escaped and that the Turks lost considerably. No one is allowed within several hours of the locality, and the neighbouring villages are all cordoned.

Sir A. Biliotti, May 12, 1902.

The propaganda of the Committee continues to claim victims. At Saviak, Caza of Demir Hissar, a Græcophil merchant, Georgi, was murdered on the 30th April. A Dr. Aristotle is accused of instigating the crime; he had been released from Drama in order to celebrate Easter.

Ibid.

In the Caza of Serres, a procession, conveying the wonder-working cross of the Orthodox Monastery of St. John Prodrome through the crops of the village of Brondon, was badly beaten and dispersed by Bulgars. The cross was lost in the scuffle, but was picked up later by a Turkish soldier and taken to Serres; it has since been restored.

Mr. Shipley May 19, 1902.

Twenty-nine of the Stroumnitza Bulgars awaiting trial at Salonica have now been condemned to various terms of imprisonment, of which seven are life sentences; among those sentenced for ten years are a schoolmaster and a priest. Ten others have been convicted *en contumace*.

The death of a Bulgar, Peter Mihoff, while imprisoned at Uskub, has caused comment. He was found shot through the head in his cell, and, though the evidence of suicide seemed satisfactory to the Consular Corps, public opinion in Uskub and elsewhere prefers to consider it a murder. Mr. Fontana, May 12, 1902. Sir A. Biliotti, May 14, 1902 "Reformi," &c.

The Bulgarian authorities have displayed some activity during May in discountenancing the movement. A band, while trying to cross into Macedonia, was attacked by Bulgarian police on the Ruejen Planina, and, after losing several men, was taken into Kustendil. Fifty boxes of powder and three boxes of cartridges were seized at the latter place. Large numbers of rifles are said to have been seized in the frontier districts. In consequence of these measures, many insurgents who have been infesting the frontier are now abandoning it. "Vyestnik" and "Information." "Nea Hemera."

The Hellenes continue to combat the movement strenuously, but their alarm is evidently subsiding.

Besides promoting the installation of an orthodox Servian Metropolitan of Uskub, Russia has administered a further rebuff to the Bulgar movement by creating a Russian Consulate at Mitrovitza.

The appointment of Mr. Schtcherbin is the sequel of Russian intervention last autumn on behalf of the Servians of Old Servia, and to prevent a recrudescence of the Arnaut persecution.

In general, the events of last month afford Bulgar claimants to Macedonia little to set off against the solid advantages gained by their opponents; unless one may so consider a discovery, said to be of importance to their historical claims, which has been made by their Consul-General in Salonica, of a bronze medal commemorating the marriage of a daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Alexis Comnenus to a Slav Prince, Dobromir Streza in 1198.

The organ of Michailov's Committee reports that one Evgenyi Lazarev, who, six or seven years ago, founded the Paris Macedonian Committee, is trying to form a similar one in London to prevent English foreign policy from being influenced by the philhellenism of the Byron Society. "Reformi."

Albania has been no quieter than usual. The feud between Riza Pasha and Bairam Zur has cost several lives. Riza, with about 100 followers, is mostly besieged in his tower at Djakova, and the town is overrun at intervals by levies of either faction mustering from 1,000 to 3,000 strong. Recently a fight developed and continued until stopped by the active intervention of three battalions. Mr. Fontana, May 24, 1902, and "Vyestnik."

The bazaar is closed and likely to remain so until the removal of one or both of the belligerents. A meeting of local notables has petitioned Constantinople in this sense with the support of the military authorities.

The market at Prizrend was also closed for a time by disorders. Ibid.

Albania (Western).

Mr. Prendergast reports the signing of a memorial by notables of Scutari and the vicinity recording their loyalty to the Sultan and their contentment under his rule, and promising to leave questions as to profanation of churches or mosques to be dealt with by the local authorities. Mr. Prendergast.

This document was sent down from Constantinople for signature, and the Chiefs did not consider that it need be taken seriously.

An incident which is interesting as showing how completely the Albanian highlands, remain *terra incognita* is that of a panic at Scutari on the 3rd May, caused by a report that a force of 2,000 strong of the Castrati, Hotti, and other tribes was marching on Scutari. Mr. Prendergast, May 4, 1902.

The approaches to the town were at once strongly held, and the garrison stood to arms, but nothing happened. Indeed, on that very day a battalion was traversing the country of these tribes on its way to relieve the garrison of Touza, an expedition undertaken every two years. Mr. Prendergast, May 17, 1902.

The Bulgarian press publishes sensational reports of the proceedings of Aladro Kastriotis, the Albanian pretender, now said to be supported by Menotti Garibaldi and Ismail Kemal. The only fact seems to be that in obedience to orders from Constantinople, two battalions were dispatched by forced marches from Janina to Valona where it was supposed Aladro was to effect a landing from Corfu. Several arrests had been made at Valona, and it is supposed that the affair was an intrigue against the persons now arrested. At any rate Aladro's campaign has not gone further as yet, than the importation of postcards with portraits of himself and with the Albanian flag which, it seems, is a double-headed eagle in black on a red ground.

The sequel of the Philiates riot has been that the obnoxious official, Sami Bey, who is

recovering from his wound, has been put on his trial. Not contented with this the local Turkish population, finding that their representations to the Sultan were intercepted, have dispatched a Commission to Constantinople to complain of the Vali's misgovernment.

It is much to be hoped that the action of the numerically insignificant Turkish element may secure the removal of a Vali who has done much towards reducing Epirus to its present condition.

"Levant Herald," May 22, 1902.

Ibrahim Pacha, General of Brigade at Elassona, has been appointed Mutessarif and Commandant of Dibra.

Sir A. Biliotti, May 17 and 19, 1902.

Sir A. Biliotti has for some time past interested himself in the troubles caused in the Chalcidic Peninsula by Gheg Albanians, who feed their flocks there in winter, and have of late been largely employed as village watchmen (bekjis) to the great detriment of the Greek villagers. As a result of the Consul-General's representations to the Vali, the employment of these tribesmen as bekjis is to be discontinued, and the annual migrations of the shepherds are to be controlled by troops.

No. 214.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. de Bunsen.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 18, 1902.

THE Turkish Ambassador referred to-day to a complaint which had been made by the Turkish Government as to the conduct of Colonel Yankoff, the Bulgarian officer who was believed to have taken a leading part in the anti-Turkish agitation which had been proceeding in Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian Government had alleged that Colonel Yankoff's speeches had been delivered in a private house. His Excellency was, however, informed on the best authority that the speeches of which complaint was made were delivered at public meetings held for the purpose of promoting the agitation which the Turkish Government so much desired to repress.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 215.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 23.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, June* 16, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 7th instant, transmitting to me copies of two Memoranda communicated to you by the Turkish Ambassador in regard to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committees in Bulgaria and of their emissaries in the Turkish provinces, and instructing me to furnish my observations on the statements made in them, and on the request of the Porte that the Great Powers should press the Bulgarian Government to dissolve the Macedonian Committee.

The first Memorandum contains, in the first place, a communication from the Grand Vizier to the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 7th May, and relating to the efforts of Sarafoff's party to "convoquer un Congrès pour fusionner les différents Comités." This, no doubt, refers to the attempt, the failure of which I had the honour to report in my despatch of the 28th May, to hold a meeting of representatives of Macedonian Societies for the purpose of bringing about the resignation of the present Committee and the election of a fresh one.

It is not clear whether the expression "fusionner les différents Comités" means "to bring the different local Societies and their managing Committees into agreement," or "to bring about the absorption of the present Central Committee by the old one." The object is the same in either case—the re-establishment of the influence of Sarafoff and his party—and it has failed for the present. The attempt is to be renewed at the meeting of the ordinary Macedonian Congress in July, when I understand it will be met by the exposure of Sarafoff's peculations to the amount of some 150,000 fr. It is possible, however, that the meeting of the Congress will be postponed.

The statement in the same communication that "les Comités sont très actifs en

ce moment" is, I think, exaggerated, whether it refers to the Central Committee, to Sarafoff's organization, or to the local Societies.

The first Memorandum continues with two communications from the Turkish Minister of the Interior to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which only shows—what is a matter of common knowledge—that brigand or insurgent bands are active in Macedonia, and that the authorities are unable to capture or disperse them. The statement that these bands do not hesitate to kill other Christians who are not of their way of thinking, is undoubtedly true, and the fact is the direct consequence of the dissensions in the Councils of the Macedonian Societies. It can hardly be wholly distasteful to the Turkish Government.

A recent number of the "Pravo," a new Macedonian paper published at Sophia, describes how a band of some 150 men under one Doncho, an emissary of Mikhailovski's Committee (not the man of the same name concerned in the abduction of Miss Stone), is operating in the neighbourhood of the Vardar, sometimes engaged with the Turkish troops, and sometimes with the bands employed by the "organisation intérieure," whose whereabouts Doncho even denounces to the Turkish authorities.

The second Memorandum communicated to your Lordship by the Turkish Ambassador, and dated the 4th June, suggests that the Great Powers should press the Bulgarian Government to dissolve the (Central) Macedonian Committee. Upon this point I have the honour to observe that the reply of the Bulgarian Government to any demand of that nature would be that the Committee is a lawfully constituted body which it is impossible to dissolve so long as it does not transgress the limits of legality. I beg leave to add that its dissolution, if it were possible, would, in my opinion, do more harm than good even from the point of view of the Turkish Government. The consequence of it would be that the Committee would become a secret body, whose operations would be less easily controlled than they are at present. The separation of Sarafoff's party from the official Committee has not made their action any less dangerous to the cause of order.

The Italian Agent (the only one who has yet received from his Government this communication of the Turkish Ambassador) and the Austro-Hungarian Agent have already reported upon it to their Governments in the above sense. The German Consul-General and the French and Russian Acting Agents appear to be of the same opinion.

I have the honour to add that in my opinion it is impossible to ask a Bulgarian Government to suppress all expression of sympathy with the populations of Macedonia, such as finds vent in the support of the Macedonian Societies in the Principality, and that any Government which attempted it would be very short-lived. It is the duty of the Government, of which, no doubt, they frequently require to be reminded by the foreign Agents, to see to it, that legitimate and peaceful agitation is not distorted into criminal action.

No. 216.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 30.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 24, 1902.

THE Acting British Consul-General at Salonica reported to me by telegraph last night that on Wednesday last, the 18th instant, a band of 100 Bulgarian insurgents captured a frontier guard-house at Toumbros in the Caza of Demir Hissar which was held by five or six Turkish guards.

Mr. A. Shipley adds that there were no casualties.

I have, &c.

(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 217.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June* 30.)

My Lord, *Athens, June* 25, 1902.

THERE has been some foundation apparently for the rumours of Bulgarian activity in Greece.

M. Zaïmis admits that there have been bands of armed Bulgarians in Thessaly, but he thought the affair was now over.

One of the bands, about twenty or thirty strong, tried to cross the river near Larissa in a boat, which was upset, and some of the party were drowned, copies of the statutes of the Bulgarian Committee were afterwards found on the bodies. About eleven were arrested.

There were one or two other bands which had been dispersed. They had been probably formed with the object of compromising the Hellenic Government.

The question of the export of arms from Athens is in the hands of the judicial authorities.

According to the reports of the Turkish Legation here, it was six weeks ago that armed Bulgarians, working in the forests near Trikkala, first excited the suspicions of the authorities. Amongst them was a certain Kiroff, who had come to Athens some time ago ostensibly to collect funds for Greek propaganda, and had even applied to the Greek Government for support. He and some others have been retained here in custody.

A second band was that which was upset in crossing the Salamvrias, and mostly drowned. A third band, or perhaps a portion of the last mentioned, was discovered near Tirnovo, and arrests have been made.

A Bulgarian, who murdered a Greek priest in Macedonia, has been arrested at Volo, and another in the Peloponnesus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 218.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 7.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July 1, 1902.*

WITH reference to Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 15th March, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Uskub, giving an excellent account of the recent disturbances at Djakova and Ferisovitch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 218.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Consul Shipley.

Sir, *Uskub, June 23, 1902.*

WITH reference to the outbreak of feud between the Bairam-Zur and Riza Bey factions at Djakova, I have the honour to report that the market there has now been reopened and the town has reassumed its ordinary aspect.

It appears that the rank of General of Division was promised both to Bairam-Zur and Riza Bey, upon condition of their dispersing their bands of followers and themselves quitting the town. To this they agreed, Riza Bey leaving with Shemsi Pasha for Ipek and Bairam-Zur for Prishtina, accompanied as far as Ferisovitch by Hamdi Pasha, who then returned to Uskub. Bairam-Zur arrived here some days ago, in order, I hear, to obtain payment of an indemnity promised him for the destruction of his kulé at Djakova. The indemnity, amounting to some £ T. 700, not being forthcoming, the authorities conceived the idea of levying a contribution, in the form of a "tax," upon the Albanians of Velchetryn, and, it is said, of Mitrovitza. Thereupon the Albanians of Mitrovitza, Velchetryn, and Prishtina closed the markets in those towns, and an armed demonstration was made before the Mitrovitza konak. The Vali was summoned to the telegraph office, and remained there with the Commandant for some hours in communication with the Mutessarif and Kaïmakams. It is extremely unlikely that the "tax" will ever be levied.

Four days later news was received here that the Ferisovitch Albanians were up in arms; that Albanian bands were entering the town from the numerous surrounding villages and making common cause with the malcontent townsfolk. A French subject (the station-master) and an Austrian family at Ferisovitch applied to their Consuls here for protection, and a letter was received last Saturday from the station-master stating that a

band of 500 Bashi-Bazouks, styling themselves "Albanian Revolutionaries," had arrived there to support the local Moslems in their agitation for a Kaïmakam; that they had occupied the mosque, the barracks, and the public baths, and were threatening to burn the town and the railway station. There were then only 150 soldiers and gendarmes at Ferisovitch, who were powerless to restore order. The telegraph wires had already been cut, and the Albanians refused to allow foreign subjects to quit the town. A band of 2,000 Albanians from Prishtina, under a certain Molloh, were reported to be marching on Ferisovitch to expel the "Revolutionaries," and force the local Albanians to withdraw their demand for an independent Kaïmakamlik.

The Prishtina Moslems are strongly opposed to the appointment of a Kaïmakam to Ferisovitch, declaring that the establishment of a Government centre and the formation of Law Courts there would draw off the traffic and trade now coming to their own town. And the proposal of the Uskub authorities to attach Ferisovitch to the Caza of Orkhanié (Kachanik) has only served to increase the general irritation. On Saturday afternoon, Shemsi Pasha was reported to have reached Ferisovitch with two battalions from Mitrovitza, and to be in possession of the town. The market there has remained closed almost continually from the date of my despatch last referred to. To-day, a delegation of from 300 to 500 Albanians from Ferisovitch and Kachanik are expected at Uskub, and the Commandant, with 40 sowars, has started to intercept and parley with them.

Ferisovitch is situated on the railway-line, and is thus in direct and easy communication with Mitrovitza, the principal market town of the Kossovo Vilayet, besides being only ten hours' distant by a good carriage road from Prizrend. It is, therefore, the natural medium for the passage of produce and merchandise from those districts, whereas Prishtina is situated some three hours from the railway-line by an inferior unpaved road. The general opinion among Turks here is that, were Ferisovitch raised to a Kaïmakamlik, Prishtina would be ruined commercially within less than ten years. It is interesting to note that at the time of the construction of the Uskub–Mitrovitza railway-line, the Prishtina Albanians refused to allow it to pass within a distance of less than three hours from their town. This they now bitterly regret, and have offered the Company to furnish wood for sleepers and unpaid labour if only they will construct a branch line from Gleodor to Prishtina.

I hear that a Kaïmakam resided at Ferisovitch for a short period some years ago, but that the Albanians cut off his ears and expelled him from the town.

At Prizrend the market had remained unopened for three weeks previous to the date of the arrival there of my French colleague and myself some ten days ago. It was then opened to save appearances, but was closed as soon as we left. As we drove through the town in the morning on our way back, the tradesmen were already putting up their shutters.

The closing of the market was a public manifestation of the discontent of the Prizrend tradesmen and people at the insecurity to property and to trade, arising from the lack of troops to guard the town against the incursion of brigand bands and of roving Albanians from the outlying districts.

For long past the Ostro-Zoug tribe of Albanians, who number about 5,000 men, and hold a village camp at the foot of the hills some hours from Prizrend, have pestered the townspeople, plundered merchandise on the high roads, and rendered communication with Louma and the villages insecure. The ex-Mutessarif of Prizrend, Jemal Bey, convened a meeting there of the local Beys and Notables some two months ago, in order to conclude a "Bessa" among them for the better security of the town and district in general.

The Beys were for the most part of opinion that a reinforcement of troops should be applied for, as the three companies then stationed at Prishtina were too weak numerically to be of any real use or protection; and Jemal Bey promised them to obtain two battalions to serve as a permanent garrison for the town and neighbourhood.

Shortly afterwards Hamdi Pasha, Commissioner of the Servian and Montenegrin frontiers, arrived at Prizrend, conversed with the various Beys and Notables and, before leaving, promised to support Jemal Bey's application for an additional force of troops. He is alleged, nevertheless, to have wired to the Palace that troops were unnecessary, thinking thus best to please his Sovereign. In any case, Jemal Bey's demand was ignored, he was taunted and jeered at by the Albanians, who threw his promise in his teeth, and whose attitude at length became so menacing that he left the town by night and escaped to Ferisovitch. His successor, Jellal Bey, formerly Procureur-Général of the Uskub Court of Appeal, reached Prizrend a fortnight ago.

The Vali speaks of him as a man of great ability. Two days after our return to Uskub two battalions of troops were sent to Prizrend. We had called upon the Vali with the purpose of suggesting that measure the day before, but found him out.

The Russian Vice-Consul at Prizrend told me that the situation of the Servians in the town is, on the whole, satisfactory. Their quarter is one of tortuous steep streets, and in nearly every house or yard there is some secret hiding-place. The quarter is not often troubled by the Albanians; the Christians there are armed, and they could offer a long and harassing resistance in the event of attack. Some months ago a handsome Servian youth was inveigled into a Turkish house by two Moslems, who endeavoured to outrage him. The young fellow shot one of them dead, the other ran away; and the Servian walked home and hid himself in a secret cellar. The police searched his house and patrolled the quarter, but he managed to escape in the night, and, with the aid of the Russian Vice-Consul, reached the Servian frontier in safety.

The chief grievances of the Servian villagers of the Prizrend region may be summed up under the following heads:—

1. "Kulluk," or forced labour, in building or in tilling land for the Albanians.

2. Blackmail levied upon each Christian family by an Albanian for his "protection," and, further, for his permission for the marriage of some member of that family.

3. Seizure by Albanians of land for long past the property of Servian Christians, and upon which they depend for their daily bread, the Christians being thus forced to quit the district and emigrate to Servia.

No Servian peasant in these parts can marry his daughter to a Christian without payment of from 2 to 20 liras to his Albanian "protector." It therefore frequently happens that, by reason of the poverty or avarice of the intended bride's father, the engaged couples are induced to dispense with the marriage ceremony altogether.

Instances of abduction or of outrage of Servian women by Albanians are rare, the latter being strict in certain of their morals, and, in general, chivalrous in their treatment of women. I am told that the Albanians never attack or injure a Christian rayah when travelling with a woman or girl.

The Moslems of Louma sent a deputation to Prizrend to assist at the meeting convoked by the ex-Mutessarif. They were among the foremost to insist upon the necessity for an adequate force to protect the Prizrend district, and their dissatisfaction at the failure of Jemal Bey to obtain reinforcements evinced itself, about a month ago, in the murder of two zaptiehs on the Louma road.

It is almost impossible to believe that Servia could ever succeed, without powerful military aid, in subjecting the Albanians of Old Servia to Servian rule. From what I have seen of the Albanian highlands, and both seen and heard of both peoples, the idea of a mere Servian domination over the Albanians seems almost preposterous. Servian expenditure and propaganda in this vilayet can hardly fail of themselves to prove futile—as futile as the present Turkish policy (which is itself of a nature resembling feeble propaganda)—in dealing with the Albanians throughout the province, resulting in the chronic state of partial anarchy and paralyzation of trade, of which this despatch may give some incomplete idea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 219.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 7.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 1, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the monthly summary of events in Macedonia during June.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Summary of Events in Macedonia during June 1902.

FROM the meagre accounts that can be collected of the military measures which presumably prevented the insurrection prognosticated for last month, it would appear that as soon as their reinforcements enabled the Turks to take an active offensive they began operating in small bodies. This enabled them to cover large areas with troops and to a certain extent to localise disaffection, but it swelled the numbers of each band of insurgents by forcing it to concentrate and by driving many peasants into the ranks. Some Turkish posts and scouting parties having been overpowered by numbers, the Turks then began using larger bodies, which they further strengthened, wherever there was a local Mussulman population, by irregular levies of their co-religionists; and by this means in the course of last month succeeded in accounting for several Bulgar bands. A comparison of the following list of actions with those reported in previous months seems to show that while the number of bands, or, at least, the number of those engaged, is smaller, the bands themselves are larger; and that the Committees in turn have been driven to operating in larger units. This is to some extent confirmed by a rumour reported from Serres of an intention of several bands to concentrate on the frontier and make a combined inroad. Districts on the Bulgarian frontier. Vice-Consul Theodorides (in Mr. Shipley's of June 9, 1902).

This tendency should to some extent relieve the non-Bulgar population from the pressure of the propagandists, but is calculated to promote the dignity of a "war of liberation" operations which might otherwise have been passed over as an oppressive but not unprecedented exercise by a Government of the right of police against the views of a minority.

Late in May a band of over ninety fought about twice as many troops and gendarmes, near Radomir, with a loss of six killed and twenty wounded and prisoners. The troops, by Bulgarian accounts, lost many more. Mr. Fontana and "Vyestnik."

A little earlier a band of about sixty had been sighted on the frontier north of Osmanie, but was not brought to action. Mr. Fontana, May 30, 1902.

On the 18th June a frontier block-house at Torembros, Demirhissar, was surprised without loss on either side by a band of over 100 on their way into Macedonia. Mr. Shipley, June 23, 1902

In the south the Committee still work in bands of about fifteen under some noted outlaw. One such band under Marco Kapedan was surprised in the village of Tertsia while attending a wedding. A counter-demonstration by the villagers enabled them to escape, and, as usual, it was the latter that suffered, thirty being arrested and some sixty rifles found. Southern districts. Mr. Shipley, June 8, 1902. Ibid., June 28, 1902. Ibid., June 29, 1902.

On the 23rd June fifteen Bulgars under Mitzko Kirchovali, were surrounded in Raklitsa, whither they had gone to kill two oppressive Aghas, by the Turkish inhabitants of two neighbouring villages, and subsequently by troops. The Bulgars lost six killed and two captured.

On the 16th June thirty Bulgars under Alexis, of Peröia, were attacked at Akindjiali without result. This place, as the size of the band indicates, is almost in the northern districts. Petro at the head of twelve men has carried off the Orthodox priests of Pesdivista and Karoulia (Kastoria).

On the 10th June Kotte's band of twenty was attacked at Roulia, near Florina, and three men wounded. The rest escaped and were joined by some thirty peasants.

Ninety prisoners have been sent from Salonica to Boudroun, in Asia Minor, of whom about twenty were condemned for political offences. The fifty and more peasants confined in Florina barracks for complicity in the affairs of Tertsia and Raklitza mentioned above, have escaped. Mr. Shipley. June 17, 1902. Ibid., June 28, 1902.

Bulgar propagandists are accused of the murders of a Christian gendarme near Djuma-Bala; of an Albanian shepherd near Moutinja; of a villager of Bakhtiar; of a Vlach near Plevna; of four Turkish soldiers who strayed across the frontier near Tchesmé Kolou; of three zaptiehs near Koritsa; of one Bey, two Aghas, and four woodmen in the Caza of Ochrida; of two villagers at Kilkish.

The disarming of the Christian population led to the robbery and murder of two Christian millers of Bounar-Bashi by Turks a few days after they had been deprived of their arms. Seven Bulgars have been killed by Turks or Albanians in the Caza of Ochrida. Ibid., June 2?, 1902.

A Dibriote is reported to have been commissioned by the authorities to raise a Other bands.

Mr. Shipley, June 28, 1902.

band of 100 or more Albanians to operate against Bulgar bands on the Albanian frontier.

At Katerina, one Alexander, a Greek, sentenced to two years for shooting a Bulgar spy set to watch him while employed by the Government as a spy on the Bulgars, has, to avoid imprisonment, gone into Olympos with a band.

"Levant Herald," June 29, 1902.

Firmilian, Metropolitan of Uskub, arrived from that place at Salonica with the Russian Consul-General on the 11th June. After several postponements his consecration was performed at a remote monastery on the Ægean coast near Enos, at 3 in the morning.

Albania.

Mr. Fontana, June 23, 1902.

The feud between Bairam Zur and Riza Pasha has been arranged by the authorities. They are to disperse their followers and leave Djakova, receiving in return the rank of Generals of Division, Riza being also indemnified for damage done to his tower. The bazaar at Diakova has accordingly reopened, but those at Mitrovitza, Velchetryn, and Prishtina have closed, in protest against a "tax" imposed on these places to raise the money to pay Riza his indemnity. An armed demonstration has been made before the konak in Mitrovitza; the Government will abandon the measure.

Jealousy between the rival towns of Ferisovitch and Prishtina has required the presence of troops at the former place, where the bazaar has been closed and the wires cut. Ferisovitch, since it cut off the ears of its Kaïmakam, has been allowed no administrative importance, but being on the rail, and a convenient centre, is destined to supplant Prishtina, which at the building of the railway, had forced it to pass at a distance of half a-day's journey. Now Prishtina has offered to build a branch line, and Ferisovitch has applied to be again made a Kaïmakamlik, two significant departures from the usual Albanian attitude of mind.

Ibid.

Dissatisfaction at the inadequacy of the garrison kept in Prisrend has caused a change of Mutessarifs, Jelal Bey, Procureur-Général of Uskub, replacing Jemal Bey. The required reinforcements have since been sent.

Mr. Fontana, who recently visited Prisrend, seems to consider the position of the Servian Christians, in that district a small minority, as hard, but not intolerable. They suffer from land-grabbing, forced labour, and blackmail at the hands of their Albanian neighbours, but their women and their lives are comparatively safe, and their position in this respect is superior to that of other Macedonian rayahs.

Mr. Shipley, June 23, 1902.

The Kaïmakam of Doiran, in the Vilayet of Salonica, is a notorious offender in respect of abductions. The Vali, on having his attention called to two recent cases, reported by the Greek Metropolitan, practically admitted the truth of the accusations.

No. 220.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 9.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 4, 1902.

IN the last summary of events in Macedonia it was pointed out that the success of the Turkish soldiery in breaking up some of the roving revolutionary bands had caused those in the northern districts to act in larger bodies. The following incident is the first evidence of this tendency in the south. It is reported that a band of 100 Committee-men entered, a few days ago, the village of Pateli, on Lake Ostrovo, on the line between Salonica and Monastir, and won over to their cause the entire population, including the adherents of the Orthodox Patriarchate, who, in this district, have hitherto shown much determination in resisting the advances of the Exarchists. The village was surrounded by troops and captured, five houses being burned and twenty Bulgarians and a number of soldiers killed and wounded.

Hitherto these bands have rarely exceeded fifteen or twenty men, and they have not, till the present instance, succeeded in inducing the general population to fraternize with them.

I am informed at the Porte that, in dispersing these bands, the local authorities have been careful to observe their instructions from Constantinople, which direct them to employ only regular troops for this purpose; but that it would prove very difficult to prevent the Moslem population from joining the troops if the Christians of the villages gave open assistance to the insurgents, as they are reported to have done at Pateli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 221.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 21.)

My Lord, *Sophia, July* 14, 1902.

ALI FERRUH BEY, the Ottoman Commissioner, told me yesterday that he had been informed that I was to receive instructions from your Lordship to make fresh representations on the subject of Colonel Yankoff, and asked me if this was the case. I replied that your Lordship had informed me that the Turkish Ambassador had again spoken to you on the subject, and had said that the assertion of the Bulgarian Government that the Colonel's anti-Turkish speeches were delivered in private houses was not true. I added that when the Bulgarian Minister had made that statement to me, he had also said that Colonel Yankoff would be watched, and would be arrested if he made any incendiary speeches in public. Since then I had heard no more of him.

Ali Ferruh Bey said the same assurance had been given to him, and Colonel Yankoff had, in fact, been arrested, and subsequently released. He also had heard nothing lately of the Colonel, and he supposed the Ambassador's remarks to your Lordship were founded on belated reports of earlier occurrences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

P.S.—15th July. I have been told this morning by a person, who says his information may be trusted, that Colonel Yankoff has crossed the frontier into Macedonia with a large band.

F. E.

No. 222.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 21.)

My Lord, *Sophia, July* 16, 1902.

MY attention having been called to an article in the "Reformi," the organ of the Macedonian Committee, declaring that the system of small bands has proved a failure, and that the only thing that remains to be done is to raise a general insurrection, and calling upon all patriots on both sides of the border to unite for the purpose, I went yesterday morning to the Bulgarian Foreign Office and, not finding the Minister, spoke to the Secretary-General about it. I said I had heard that the Committee had received a warning from the Chief of the Police to restain their language and their actions, but it appeared to me that something more than a warning was required to meet the case of such an article as that of the "Reformi," and that the responsibility of the Government was gravely involved by the escape of Colonel Yankoff, who was, by way of being watched across the frontier (as reported in my preceding despatch), and by the existence at Kustendil of the principal depôt of arms and ammunition, destined for Macedonian revolutionary work.

The Secretary-General professed complete ignorance, but said he would mention what I had said to the Minister. Later in the day he brought me a message from his Excellency to the effect that, on account of the article in the "Reformi," and of other proceedings on their part, the Committee had been warned that they ran the risk of being suppressed, and of having those of their number who are Macedonians, and not Bulgarian subjects, expelled the country.

I shall return to the subject the first time I see the Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 223.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 22.)

My Lord, *Sophia, July* 19, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that I spoke this morning to M. Daneff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, about Macedonia.

His Excellency said there were two spots in Macedonia which were causing some uneasiness to the Bulgarian Government. One was the Maleshovo district, where bands had collected to the number of 200 or 300 men, and were supposed to be under the command of the notorious Colonel Yankoff. I said I thought the Government had incurred serious responsibility in allowing that officer, who was supposed to be under surveillance, to cross the frontier. He replied that the Colonel had escaped from the place where he was "interné," and had made his way, he did not know how, into Macedonia. He believed he had even at one time gone to Constantinople. At any rate he was in the Maleshovo Mountains now, and was exciting the people with promises of Bulgarian and Russian support.

The Bulgarian Government, said M. Daneff, had realized that their police arrangements on the frontier were inadequate, and that in spite of all their efforts bands did succeed in escaping the vigilance of the guards. They had therefore obtained a credit of 60,000 fr., with which a new corps of gendarmerie would be formed, to be raised entirely in districts at a distance from the frontier, the local levies not having proved wholly trustworthy. The military authorities also would lend additional men. With these increased forces the patrolling of the frontier would be much more effective.

I mentioned the large depôt of arms said to exist at Kustendil. M. Daneff said there were no doubt concealed stores of arms in that neighbourhood, and one of the duties of the gendarmerie would be to search for them.

The other spot in Macedonia which gave him uneasiness—even more so than Maleshovo—was the neighbourhood of Monastir, where the Turkish authorities were trying to disarm the population, and were doing it with their usual lack of discrimination, arresting numbers of innocent persons, so that men who had no thought of insurrection were taking to the mountains to avoid the raids of the authorities, who might, if more care was not taken, provoke the very disorders they were trying to prevent. M. Daneff suggested that, if the disarmament must be proceeded with, the Turkish authorities charged with carrying it out should be accompanied by Consular Delegates as a means of reassuring the population.

With regard to the recent article in the "Reformi," which I mentioned to him, M. Daneff said that the members of the Macedonian Committee had been sent for and warned that if they did not moderate their language they would be proceeded against, and, if necessary, suppressed. His Excellency said, however, that the Government had better ways of dealing with the Committee than by suppression, which would make martyrs of them, and had other disadvantages. He could not, however, believe that Messrs. Mikhailovsky and Tsoncheff, who were moderate men, could seriously advocate extreme measures, and he believed the article in the "Reformi" could only have been designed to take the wind out of the sails of the Opposition, in view of the approaching Macedonian Congress.

In conclusion, M. Daneff said he was convinced there was no real danger of an outbreak at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 224.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 25, 1902.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 16th instant, recording a conversation with the Secretary-General to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs respecting the proceedings of the Macedonian Committee.

The language held by you on this occasion has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 225.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 28.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 23, 1902.

I WAS not surprised to learn a few days ago that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had been making serious representations to the Sublime Porte with a view to arousing the latter to a more lively sense of the dangerous course which events seem to have been taking for some time past in Macedonia.

Mr. Block was informed, confidentially, at the Sublime Porte, that both Baron de Calice and M. Zinovieff, the Russian Ambassador, had insisted in an interview with the Grand Vizier and the Foreign Minister on something being done to prevent the Macedonian question assuming a more threatening aspect. The matter was accordingly thrashed out in a series of conferences between the Grand Vizier, the Foreign Minister, and the Minister of the Interior, and a Report to the Palace drawn up urging that special instructions might be at once sent to the Valis in the Macedonian and Albanian provinces. The nature of these instructions, which had received the Sultan's approval, Mr. Block did not apprehend very clearly; but he gathered that greater powers than they had hitherto enjoyed are to be given to the Valis, and that it is intended that they shall be consulted in future in the appointment and dismissal of officials, and take all necessary and urgent measures for the preservation of order, without referring every point, as they now do, to the Palace.

M. de Calice has since admitted to me the general accuracy of this information, except that he was not aware of the precise decision come to by the consulting Ministers. He told me that he had confined himself to pointing out the danger, and that he had not recommended any particular line of action. His Excellency appeared satisfied on the whole with the alleged result of his representations, in which he did not say that the Russian Ambassador had joined. It was something to have got the Sublime Porte to move in the matter, and if a beginning had really been made it would be easier in future to urge the adoption of further measures.

Since writing the above I have been informed by the Grand Vizier that, in addition to the instructions already sent to the Valis, of which he gave me no details, he had agreed with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Interior to recommend to the Council of Ministers the adoption of a series of reforms in Macedonia and Albania, in order to place on a better footing the system of public instruction, agriculture, and commerce and trade in those regions, and to afford the inhabitants a better guarantee that the public peace and security will be maintained. The nature of these reforms, if accepted by the Council, would depend on the Report of a Technical Commission which it was intended to dispatch to the provinces in question.

I have, &c.

(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 226.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 4.)

My Lord, *Sophia, July* 28, 1902.

BORIS SARAFOFF has returned to Sophia, in anticipation of the approaching Macedonian Congress, to which he has been elected a Delegate by a provincial Society.

The Ottoman Commissioner tells me he has asked officially that Sarafoff be arrested, the Congress prevented from meeting, and the Macedonian Committee dissolved, and that he has received promises that all three things shall be done; but he hardly seems to expect that any of these promises will be kept.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 227.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 4.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 30, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit the Monthly Report on affairs in Macedonia for July 1902.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE. BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 227.

Monthly Report of Events in Macedonia for July 1902.

North Macedonia.

NO official news has been received during the month of the action of the large bands in North Macedonia.

The revolutionary press contains notices of skirmishes at Strumitza and Demirhissar, but no details.

It would not yet be safe to infer that the measures of the Bulgarian Government against the storage and export of arms have had a pacifying effect.

Mr. Fontana, June 28, 1902.

Arms are introduced into Macedonia by the following routes from Kustendil: by Juma-Bala and Melnik to Nevrokop and Serres; by Sass, a frontier village, where the priest is said to be a Committee man, to Strumitza Doiran and Kukush over Malesh Mountains, or to Kupreli, Perlepe, and Monastir; by Deve-Bardan on the frontier to Egri-Palanka, Kratova, Kumanova to Uskub, or on by Bresitza to Selenikova and across the Vardar to Udreshova. By these routes the Committee claim to have introduced 40,000 rifles.

This is probably an exaggeration, but at a Committee meeting in April Colonel Yankoff claimed to have bought as many as 20,000, of which 3,000 were Männlichers, and large numbers were recently seized by the authorities in Kustendil.

Mr. Elliot, July 15, 1902.

Ibid., July 14, 1902.

Colonel Yankoff himself was arrested in the course of the month, but was released, and is now supposed to be in Macedonia. The appeals for insurrection lately issued by the Committee are, however, probably with a view to improving their position in the approaching Congress.

Monastir Vilayet.

The chances of an insurrection can be, to some extent, estimated from the fight at Pateli (reported in Mr. de Bunsen's despatch of the 4th July), which was the result of a deliberate and determined attempt of Marco Kapedan to raise the district. According to

Mr. Pissurica, July 2, 1902.

Mr. Pissurica, who visited Pateli during the fight, Marco had intended to establish himself in the villages round Lake Ostrova, to break up the railway and cut the wires, and thereby both cut off Monastir from Salonica and secure to his enterprise the desirable publicity of which similar undertakings in more remote localities have hitherto successfully been deprived. As it is, the Bulgar movement has undoubtedly sustained a blow from the fact that the insurrection, although general, including both parties in a locality where they were hitherto bitterly opposed, was by prompt military action kept entirely local. The

"Reformi," July 6, 1902.

Turks report twenty-two prisoners and twelve Committeemen shot or burned; four villagers wounded and six dead. The Bulgar account says that 200 soldiers were put out of action, and that after the escape of the majority of the Committee the villagers continued the resistance until the troops entered under cover of a screen of women and children. This, and the death of two women and a child in consequence, is confirmed by Mr. Pissurica's report.

Mr. Pissurica and Mr. Shipley, July 15, 1902.

It was confidently asserted that Marco had been killed at Pateli, but he reappeared a month after at Papadia, when the survivors of the band were again attacked, with a loss, it is said, of ten more of their number.

Among those killed at Pateli was the poet Christo Silianov, a schoolmaster of whom the revolutionary paper writes that he "was an apostle of freedom with pen, tongue, and knife," and who seems to have been one of those enthusiasts as indispensable to an insurrectionary movement as hired "Soudards" like Marco Kapedan.

It is remarkable that, whereas the spirit which inspired the Greek insurrection of the early nineteenth century was reactionary and religious, that of the Macedonian Bulgars in the early twentieth century is rather political and progressive; and that the part played by the village priest in Greece has been taken in Macedonia by the village teacher. The importance of an educational propaganda was never questioned, and as early as 1885 a foreign authority reckons 90 schools in Monastir Vilayet. In 1897 these had increased, again on foreign authority, to 134. In 1901 Roumanian statistics give 240 schools, Bulgarian reports claiming over 280, of which five, at Perlepe, Vodena, Florina, Ochrida, and Resna, are secondary; two at the two first-named places are for girls, and the rest primary. Monastir is one of the four educational districts, each under a school Superintendent and Council, and sub-divided again into educational parishes, also with Superintendents and Councils. The whole system is under the Director of the Bulgar Gymnasium at Salonica, which provides it with teachers. Sarafoff, the present leader of the party of action, once held this post as head of an organization which was always political, but was originally pacific.

In 1899, another head of the propaganda, Rizoff, wrote in an open letter to Prince Ferdinand, "Bulgar activity can go no further on these lines (*i.e.*, educational); we can gain nothing more by church or school. We have got all we can of Turkey, and are losing ground before Hellenism. Our principal object must now be to free Macedonia." His opinions seem to have been generally held, and from that time the educational system of the Committee has been undisguisedly converted into a revolutionary organization; the school-houses become magazines or strongholds, and masters and mistresses take the field with Marco and Petroff. Mr. Rizoff, April 26, 1899.

All accounts show that strenuous efforts are being made to disarm the population of Monastir Vilayet; amnesty is promised to all handing in arms before a certain date, and immunity from further inquisition to those who give information leading to their discovery. As Mr. Shipley points out, the disarmament of the border villages will leave them completely at the mercy of the Albanians. Mr. Shipley, July 15, 1902.

Bulgars and Albanians.

Owing to the comparative weakness of the Turkish authority on the Albanian border the Bulgar bands of Nikoloff, Papachristoff, and Tasseff have not come into prominence by collision with the troops as have those of Marco, Petroff, and others in the interior. They have so far been employed in making head against the league of Albanian freebooters, Turkish Aghas, and Greek informers under the "Counter-Committee" of Ochrida.

The assassination by Nikoloff of a tyrannous Turkish Agha, near Stronga, caused a descent on his village, Laghdighe, by a large party of Albanians, who fired twenty houses, killed four villagers, and sent six as "slaves" to Dibra. Other parties killed three villagers at Arbino and others elsewhere, *i.e.*, two in Trebenitsa, and three in Viscani. In reprisal the Bulgars killed two Turkish Aghas at Tateche, near Ochrida, and another two at Bentse. Mr. Shipley, July 15, 1902. Sir A. Biliotti, July 26, 1902.

Islam Onbashi has during this month committed the following crimes:—At Kositsino he murdered the usurer Bamadan with his son and nephew, and carried off the two sons of a rich Turk, aged 13 and 15, for whom he is asking 80 liras ransom. At Novoselo he carried off the sons of a Christian, Daniel, and of a Moslem, Halil, and asks 100 liras for them. At Krapa he murdered two Christians who refused to act as spies for him. At Bresnitza he carried off three Christians, and is asking 150 liras; he also killed five others. At Krovschie he forced a woman to become a Moslem, and outraged five girls. At Karbonitsa he murdered two Bulgar brothers, Mitsko and Mille. At Tominoselo and Strovia he carried off ten horses and fourteen head of cattle. At Topolnitsa he killed two men, at Monastirets one, and a woman at Bentse. Ibid.

Saadedin, a new comer, robbed two workmen near Poretse, and sent the ears of one to the police-station. Ibid.

On the 7th instant a band of twenty Albanians carried off four Christians of Molovitsa, killed one of them for trying to escape, and asked 200 liras ransom for the others. The same band carried off one Stepho from Resna; he paid 30 liras and was then killed. Ibid.

Four unknown persons killed two Bulgar shepherds at Novak, close to Monastir, and another three Christians, one a boy of 14, next day, at Movshinits.

A list of the names and haunts of sixteen Albanian freebooters is not of sufficient general interest to insert, but a translation of a letter in Macedonian dialect from one of them to a village which he has long persecuted is given in illustration of their methods:—

"From me, Tahir Tola, to you, Headman of Galichan: Oh, fools of Giaours! for the last time we tell you, my friend Islam Garan and I, that if you do not pay up 2,000 liras I shall cut and flay every man I find; God shall not give you protection. Michael Chalovski is going to you; I have word of it; you shall not lease him any village land. If you do not obey, but think what comes into your heads, I will come with 150 men and bring dust and ashes on you."

Mr. Shipley, July 5, 1902. Mr. Shipley suggests that pressure be brought on the Vali of Monastir to restrain the Albanians, who are even more brutal and much less discriminating than the Bulgars.

Mr. Fontana, June 29, 1902. Nazmi Bey, Kaïmakam of Kalkandelen, is transferred to Mitrovitza; Hassim Bey goes from Burhania to Kalkandelen; Rassim Effendi, from Constantinople, takes his place. Abdur Rahman Effendi, Kaïmakam of Ghilan, goes to Yanina; Nazim Bey, of Kumanova, to Ishtib; Zia Effendi, from the Civil School, to Kumanova. The Kaïmakam of Palanka goes to Juma-Bala.

Epirus

Official information has been received as to the brigands in Epirus. Malik Bey, with sixty men, is now infesting Frasciari; his relation, Kiazim Bey, with thirty men, succeeded

Mr. Pissurica, July 2, 1902. in robbing the Monastir mail of 600 liras, Government money, on the 2nd July. A Fakreddin Bey, apparently a Yanina Turk, is near Zavaliani with thirty followers; a "Christian" brigand is near Konitza with twenty, and another band of twenty has appeared at Nigrades, four hours from Yanina.

The prisoners from Philiates and Avlona are still in the vaults of Yanina Castle. The troops at Avlona are suffering from fever, and will be withdrawn.

No official information has yet been received from Scutari of the troubles at Mokra, on the Montenegrin frontier; but it is reported in Constantinople that it is another grass-cutting dispute, and will be settled as in August last year, when the Sultan bought the crop for 500*l*. On that occasion, as the hay could not be cut, troops were finally sent to burn it. It is also reported that M. Bakitch, Montenegrin Chargé d'Affaires, has demanded the recall of Hamdi Pasha, President of the Boundary Commission, and that Shenzi Pasha will replace him.

"Torgovsky Vyestnik," July 25, 1902. The crops in the Vilayet of Salonica are reported to be very good; in those of Kossovo, Monastir, Scutari, and Yanina only average.

No. 228.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 18.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 8, 1902.

THE Turkish Commissioner in Sophia has addressed a note to the Bulgarian Government requesting the dissolution of the Macedonian Committee, and demanding that the Congress to be opened on the 10th shall not be permitted to meet. The somewhat vague reply which he has received to the effect that, if the measures taken by the Bulgarian Government—presumably to guard the frontier—prove inadequate, his demands will be complied with, leaves little doubt that no obstacles will be raised to the meeting of the Congress.

The meeting of the Delegates from all parts of Bulgaria to elect a new President and Committee will be the occasion of a trial of strength between the Moderate party headed by Messrs. Mikhailovsky and Tsoncheff, and the more violent section identified with the name of Boris Sarafoff, who has just returned to Sophia from Philippopoli.

In preparation for the struggle for the direction of the policy of the Association, the Committee has issued a pamphlet dilating on Turkish misrule in Macedonia, and calling on the Powers to execute the XXIIIrd Article of the Treaty of Berlin, providing for an autonomous régime in the European provinces of Turkey; and it is perhaps also with a view to gaining credit for activity with the Delegates at the Congress that Colonel Yankoff has been dispatched across the frontier.

The candidate of the Moderates for the presidency will be General Tsoncheff, as M. Mikhailovsky intends to resign, while the Sarafoffist party are going to put forward M. Deltcheff, who, should he be elected, will be a mere puppet, the strings being in the hands of Sarafoff.

It is said that the present Committee will attempt to exclude the Sarafoffist

Delegates from the Congress on the ground that the Societies they represent have not obeyed the orders they had received from head-quarters, and should the attempt be made, some disorders are anticipated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 229.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 18.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August 9, 1902.*

COLONEL YANKOFF, whose escape from police surveillance into Macedonia was reported in Mr. Elliot's despatch of the 14th ultimo, is said to have left the mountainous district of Plaskhowitza, north of Strumnitza, and to have moved nearer to the frontier.

A letter from him dated the 13th July, and published in a Kustendil paper, describes the terrorizing system of the "organisation intérieure" directed by Sarafoff as causing as much misery to the Bulgarian inhabitants as does the misrule and oppression of the Turks.

On the 6th instant, a battalion of reserves and a squadron of the Sophia regiment of cavalry were sent to assist the gendarmerie in guarding the frontier in the neighbourhood of Kustendil, in which town fifteen Macedonians were arrested on suspicion of attempting to cross the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 230.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 18.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 11, 1902.*

LITTLE, if any, progress appears to have been made with the projected reforms for Macedonia, as recommended by the Special Commission of Ministers, presided over by the Grand Vizier. The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador tells me that the Council of Ministers issued a Report in favour of the proposals of the Special Commission, which, as already reported in my despatch of the 23rd ultimo, were intended to effect improvements in the field of public instruction, trade, commerce, agriculture, the administration of Justice, and the maintenance of order and security. It was also recommended that larger powers of initiative should be given to the provincial Governors, obviating constant reference to the Sublime Porte in an emergency. Baron de Calice hears that the Sultan is not at all disposed to agree on this latter point, and that the proposal for a reorganization of the gendarmerie, which is now so largely made up of irregulars, has also been rejected by His Imperial Majesty. Nor has anything more been heard of the local Commissions, which the Grand Vizier told me it was intended to appoint in order to obtain full information on the requirements of the various districts in the disturbed region.

Baron de Calice still thinks, however, that some good has been done by directing the attention of the Ottoman Government to the dangers of the present situation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 231.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. de Bunsen.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 21, 1902.*

THE Turkish Ambassador communicated to-day two Memoranda on the subject of the alleged designs of Bulgarian revolutionists.

The first Memorandum states that the Turkish Government are informed by the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Monastir that the Ottoman local authorities have seized papers showing that the Bulgarians of that vilayet have been invited by the

Central Committee to provide themselves with arms and ammunition in order to provoke disturbances by means of arson and assassination with the object of forcing the situation of the province upon the attention of Europe.

Bulgarian agitators at Dereli in Thessaly have even been found in possession of a regulation inclosed in a red cover which is inscribed with threatening and revolutionary designs.

It is further stated that, contrary to the assurances given by Prince Ferdinand's Government both to the Powers and to the Sublime Porte, Revolutionary Committees, formed officially with the full cognizance of the Bulgarian Government, are pursuing their activity without hindrannce not only at Sophia but also, by means of branch organizations, in the various towns of Bulgaria, thus constituting a constant menace to peace and order, and compelling the Imperial Government to maintain at great expense a considerable force on the frontier.

The Turkish Government add that the local authorities in the vilayet have again been instructed to take all necessary measures to insure that the Mussulman population, though under constant provocation from the Bulgarian agitators, shall not resort to reprisals.

The second Memorandum states that Anthopoulo Pasha has been informed by the Grand Vizier that bands of Bulgarians, among whom are officers of the Bulgarian army, frequently invade the Ottoman provinces, and that when the Turkish troops take measures to repell them, the Bulgarian militia come to the assistance of the agitators. It is believed that the Revolutionary Committee will attempt, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Church of Shipka, to provoke an insurrection with the aid of officers of the Bulgarian territorial guard.

The Turkish Government have been compelled to reinforce their troops, and have requested the Bulgarian Government to abandon the intended manœuvres at Shipka.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 232.

The Turkish Chargé d'Affaires to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 30.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne, et, se référant aux précédentes communications de cette Ambassade au sujet des agissements des Comités Bulgares Révolutionnaires, a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie que la Sublime Porte a appris par le Commissaire Impérial à Sophia que toutes ses démarches auprès du Gouvernement Bulgare pour obtenir la dissolution des dits Comités sont restées infructueuses, et que le Gouvernement Princier a déclaré qu'il ne pouvait pas empêcher leurs réunions.

Hamid Bey, conformément aux instructions de son Gouvernement, s'empresse d'attirer l'attention toute particulière de sa Seigneurie sur l'indispensable nécessité d'insister énergiquement auprès du Gouvernement Bulgare pour qu'il procède sans retard à la dissolution des Comités dont il s'agit, attendu que c'est l'unique moyen d'assurer dans la Péninsule Balkanique le maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité publique tant désiré par les Puissances.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,
Londres, le 30 *Août,* 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and, with reference to the preceding communications from this Embassy relative to the agitation of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees, has the honour to inform his Lordship that the Sublime Porte has learnt from the Imperial Commissioner at Sophia that all the representations made to the Bulgarian Government to obtain the dissolution of the said Committees have produced no effect, and that the Prince's Government has declared itself unable to prevent their meetings.

In accordance with the instructions of his Government, Hamid Bey hastens to draw his Lordship's very special attention to the absolute necessity of energetically insisting on the Bulgarian Government taking immediate steps for the dissolution of the

said Committees, seeing that this is the only way to insure the maintenance in the Balkan Peninsula of order and public security so much desired by the Powers.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
August 30, 1902.

No. 233.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 27, 1902.

THE "Gazette de Commerce" of the 22nd reports the following incident on what it believes to be trustworthy authority:—

Four armed Bulgarians disguised as Albanians came into conflict at Bansko (a few miles south-east of Stroumnitza) with three Turks also armed, one of them being a well-known and feared gendarme officer, and the two others his sons. The Bulgarians opened fire, and, on the police officer falling wounded, his sons took shelter behind some rocks close at hand. Believing the Turk to be dead, one of the Bulgarians approached him, and was killed by two shots from the wounded man's revolver; the fight continued for a short time, but ended by the Bulgarians taking to flight.

It is somewhat remarkable that a Bulgarian paper should relate an incident which terminated to the discredit of the Bulgarians who began the combat and were in superior force; but I think it worth reporting also as showing that by disguising themselves as Albanians the Bulgarians in Macedonia are ready to take advantage of the immunity which Albanian lawlessness too often enjoys.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 234.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 27, 1902.

THE Italian Agent, M. Polacco, came to see me this morning, and told me that the Ottoman Ambassador in Rome had pressed the Italian Government to make representations to that of Bulgaria, asking for the suppression of the Macedonian Committee, and protesting against the forthcoming military fêtes at Shipka and the calling out of the reserves in connection with them, and had also spoken in the same sense to the Representatives of the Great Powers in that capital; M. Polacco had therefore been authorized to join in any representations which the other Diplomatic Agents in Sophia might be instructed to make. He had learnt from his German and Austro-Hungarian colleagues that they had received no communication from their Governments in this sense; but the French Agent had been informed of the *démarche* of the Turkish Ambassador, though without receiving instructions to make representations.

In reply to his inquiry, I said that I had heard nothing on the matter from your Lordship, and I remarked that, as regards the Shipka fêtes, which were being held out of compliment to Russia, His Majesty's Government hardly would be disposed to take any action of the kind suggested. M. Polacco replied that similar considerations had prevented him from mentioning the action of the Turkish Ambassador in Rome to the Russian Agent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 235.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, August* 27, 1902.

ON Saturday last a band of some sixty armed persons, said to be mostly Macedonians, left Sophia under the leadership of a man named Kolijo, intending to gain the forests on Mount Vitosh on the south side of the capital, and thence to cross into Turkish territory. It is supposed that this date was settled as being particularly favourable to the enterprise, as the gendarmerie would have been withdrawn from the country to the towns to keep order at the municipal elections on the following day. The authorities, however, had knowledge of the expedition, and a force of gendarmerie, mounted and on foot, came up with the party at Dragalevtsi on the north slope of Vitosh and surrounded it. No resistance was offered, and the band was quietly disarmed and conducted to Sophia. They were found to be in possession of a flag embroidered with a figure of liberty and an inscription.

It is hard to believe that the affair was serious; to say nothing of the difficulty of sixty armed men leaving a town of the size of Sophia unnoticed, they can scarcely have hoped to cross the 25 kilom. of comparatively open country between the south side of Vitosh and the mountainous Rilo district without the local authorities being aware of their presence. Some of my colleagues believe that the whole thing has been got up "for the edification of the Turkish Commissioner" by Boris Sarafoff.

As I had occasion to call on M. Sarafoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, this afternoon on another matter, I asked him what he thought of the affair. He said that in his opinion the people engaged in it were quite in earnest; that they were ignorant and fanatical in the Macedonian cause, but as they did not belong to this district, they did not realize the impossibility of gaining the frontier unperceived; and he added, as a proof of their want of intelligence, that most of them wore a kind of uniform.

The judicial inquiry into the case is proceeding.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 236.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 1.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, August* 27, 1902.

THE 10th Macedonian Congress, which lasted from the 9th to the 16th instant, passed off without disturbance and has resulted in the formal secession from the general Macedonian organization of the Sarafoffist party. That the Bulgarian Government has contributed in some degree to this I have little doubt, for, although M. Daneff told the Turkish Commissioner that, beyond forbidding Government employés to take part in it, he could do nothing to prevent the meeting of the Congress, he hinted that the Government was taking measures which would probably rob it of much of its importance.

The early sittings were occupied in examining the mandates of a number of Delegates, mostly Sarafoffiists, representing local Committees which, for one reason or another, were considered not to be entitled to be present at the Congress, and as the Tsoncheffists were in a majority, most of these claims were disallowed.

In consequence of this purge the Report of the High Committee on its proceedings during the past twelve months was adopted with only thirteen dissentients out of the sixty-four Delegates present and these, headed by Sarafoff and Davidoff, left the hall in a body as soon as the Congress proceeded to the election of its officers for the coming year. Contrary to general expectation M. Mikhailovsky, whose resignation had been almost publicly announced, and General Tsoncheff were reinstalled as President and Vice-President respectively, the other members of the High Committee being Messrs. Stoicheff, Beloff, Nikoloff, and Bosukoff. The new Committee have since issued a Circular to the local bodies, which in great part is an attack on the Sarafoffist faction, and which ends by an appeal for support for themselves.

On quitting the Congress, Boris Sarafoff and his friends betook themselves to a room in a neighbouring brasserie where they were joined by the excluded Delegates,

opened a Congress of their own, and proceeded to elect a Committee of six for the year with Stanisheff as President. Its further proceedings have not yet come to light.

M. Sarafoff, the Minister of Finance, who is acting as Foreign Minister during M. Daneff's absence, tells me that owing to lack of funds neither section is in a position to do much at present. He explained that the accusations of malversation brought against Boris Sarafoff twelve months ago had very seriously affected the contributions of money, and of late he believed that they had almost entirely ceased.

No. 237.

Mr. de Bunsen to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August* 26, 1902.

IN my despatch of the 23rd ultimo, I mentioned that it was the intention of the Porte to appoint a Technical Commission to study and report on the condition of public instruction, agriculture, and commerce in Macedonia, with a view to the institution of reforms.

The Turkish press now announces that this Commission is to be constituted at once, and will leave for the scene of its investigations with the least possible delay.

An Imperial Iradé recommends the exercise of great judgment in the selection of experienced persons to serve on the Commission, which will be composed of delegates from the Ministries of Public Works and Commerce, Agriculture and Mines, Evkaf, Public Instruction, Interior, Justice, Police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

No. 238.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 4.)

My Lord, *Athens, August* 28, 1902.

I ASKED M. Zaïmis yesterday if he had any news from Macedonia. He replied that he thought M. Metaxas had already communicated to your Lordship all the information which had recently reached the Greek Government. He went on to complain, however, of the inactivity of the Turkish gendarmerie in dealing with the Bulgarian—he meant to say brigand—bands. They received no pay, and preferred living quietly at the expense of the population to performing more arduous duties. The armed bands, he said, showed less disposition than formerly to molest the adherents of the Patriarch, and now confined their attention to the Turks. I gathered that he regarded this change of plan with some concern as tending to unite the different Christian races in a way unfavourable to Greek interests.

M. Zaïmis next alluded to the projected assemblage of 50,000 Bulgarian troops in the Shipka Pass on the occasion of the approaching celebrations there. Such a military demonstration, he said, was not warranted by the total strength of the army; it would serve no useful purpose, and he feared that it would encourage the Bulgarian revolutionary propaganda in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

No. 239.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Stronge.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 4, 1902.

THE Greek Minister called at this Office to-day and stated that, from despatches which he had lately received, it appeared that the Greek Government consider current reports as to the condition of affairs in Macedonia to be greatly exaggerated.

The Greek Government do not believe that there is any probability of serious disturbance in Macedonia during the coming autumn. According to their information,

the foreign press is being worked by the Committees in order to keep the Macedonian question before the Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 240.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 6.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September 3, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that General Tsoncheff, Vice-President of the Macedonian Committee, was arrested on the 1st instant at Dubnitsa, a large village some 30 miles south of Sophia, on suspicion of having organized the Bulgarian band whose capture was reported in my despatch of the 27th ultimo. The General was subsequently conveyed to Sophia, where, on the morning of the 2nd, the police took possession of the offices of the Macedonian Committee. A considerable number of persons were present at the time, among them being the Secretary and the Treasurer, while the President, M. Mikhailovsky, arrived a little later. The order authorizing the police to search the premises was read to these gentlemen, who offered no opposition to the proceedings.

A large quantity of documents was removed, and the office was shut and its doors sealed. It is said that, although some of the most secret papers are missing, the archives seized contain a fairly complete account of the operations of the Committee since 1895, and very compromising revelations are expected.

Letters in cypher were found on the person of a member of the Committee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 241.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 8.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, September 3, 1902.*

ON the 22nd March last Sir A. Biliotti reported the intention of the Russian Government to establish a Vice-Consulate at Mitrovitza.

Mr. Shipley now informs me by telegraph from Uskub that, on the arrival at Mitrovitza on Saturday last of the Cavasses of the proposed Vice-Consulate with the newly appointed Vice-Consul's horses and luggage, the Albanians forced the Kaïmakam to send them to Uskub, declaring that they would not tolerate a Russian Vice-Consul at Mitrovitza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 242.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Marling.

Sir, *Foreign Office, September 10, 1902.*

I TRANSMIT to you herewith, a copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at this Court relative to the state of affairs in Macedonia.*

Hamid Bey states that the Turkish Government, who have made repeated representations to the Bulgarian Government without success, desire to call attention to the necessity for exercising energetic pressure on that Government with a view to their proceeding to the dissolution of the Macedonian Committees without delay.

I should wish to be furnished with your observations on this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

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* No. 232.

No. 243.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, September* 12, 1902.

THE Greek Consul at Monastir reports to his Government that it was decided at a recent meeting of the Bulgarian Committee that energetic action should be taken in Macedonia on the 18th September (presumably old style). The Greek Government believe that trouble is being prepared in the Balkan Peninsula by the other Slav Committees.

No. 244.

Turkish Chargé d'Affaires to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 13.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne, et a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie que d'une communication émanée de son Altesse le Grand Vizir il appert qu'un engagement a eu lieu tout récemment entre des soldats Ottomans et une bande de brigands faisant partie de la milice Bulgare et que cette bande se composait de vingt-quatre hommes. La communication Grand Vizirielle mentionne également qu'au cours du dit engagement trois de ces brigands furent tués tandis qu'un fut capturé, et que celui-ci a déclaré qu'ils étaient partis de Bulgarie depuis les Pâques dernières et qu'il a ajouté qu'ils avaient parcouru, en commettant tous les excès, les différentes localités du Vilayet de Kossovo.

Le document susmentionné porte en outre que la plupart de ces brigands étaient revêtus d'uniformes Bulgares et armés de fusils Mannlicher et que deux des képis saisis étaient ceux des soldats appartenant à l'infanterie de l'armée régulière Bulgare. Sur chaque côté de ces képis se trouvaient les emblêmes du Comité Révolutionnaire.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 12 *Septembre*, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne and has the honour to inform his Lordship that it appears from a communication from his Highness the Grand Vizier that an engagement has quite recently taken place between Ottoman troops and a band of brigands forming part of the Bulgarian militia, and that this band was composed of twenty-four men. The communication from the Grand Vizier also states that, in the course of the engagement three of the brigands were killed while one was captured. The latter declared that they had left Bulgaria last Easter, adding that they had traversed the whole Vilayet of Kossovo, committing excesses of every kind.

The document further mentions that the majority of these brigands were clad in Bulgarian uniforms and armed with Männlicher rifles, while two of the caps seized were those of soldiers belonging to the infantry of the Bulgarian regular army. On either side of these caps were the emblems of the Revolutionary Committee.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
September 12, 1902.

No. 245.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September* 10, 1902.

THE Sarafoffist Macedonian Committee, the formation of which was reported in my despatch of the 27th ultimo, has published its account of the proceedings which led to their secession from the Congress. They assert that they are supported by a majority of the Delegates present in Sophia at the end of the Congress;

* Also to Mr. Marling.

that the meeting presided over by Mikhailovsky was, therefore, not representative, and that the true tenth General Macedonian Congress was that which was held by the seceders on the 16th ultimo, and elected M. Stanisheff as President for the year.

They have since opened a head office and started a press organ, so that there are now in Sophia two "Bureaux du Haut Comité Macédono-Andrinopolitain" and two "Reformi" newspapers.

Boris Sarafoff himself is not a member of the Committee. He was in Sophia till a few days ago, and the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs believes, in spite of reports to the contrary, that he has not left the country.

It is said that Sarafoff finds that, although the Bulgarians of the towns and larger villages of Macedonia are strongly animated with the revolutionary spirit, those in the remoter districts and in the mountains, on whom the bands sent across the frontier must greatly depend, are by no means enthusiastic in the cause, and he is, therefore, devoting his energy to spreading the propaganda among them, and has, for the present, abandoned the policy of armed incursions from this country. It is probable that want of funds has something to do with this decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 246.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 15.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September 10, 1902.*

ALTHOUGH M. Daneff returned to Bulgaria on Saturday last, he was only a few hours in the capital, and M. Sarafoff, the Minister of Finance, has continued to act for him, as well as for M. Ludskanoff, the Minister of the Interior, who has likewise been absent for a short time.

When I called on him this morning, his Excellency expressed his regret that the pressure of the work of three offices had twice compelled him to put off the usual weekly receptions at the Foreign Office, and, in answer to a question I put to him as to the arrest of General Tsoncheff, remarked that the first accounts of it and subsequent events which became public were not accurate. The General, it was true, had been arrested on suspicion of complicity in the Dragalevtsi affair (see my despatch of the 27th ultimo), but subsequent inquiries had not confirmed his connection with it; compromising papers, however, had been found on him relating to other earlier matters, and it had, therefore, been decided to intern him at Drenovo, near Tirnovo; the perquisitions made at the Macedonian Committee's office had produced no evidence of importance, and the seals had, therefore, been taken off the doors, so that the office was only closed for a few days.

In reply to my inquiry whether there was any truth in the report that a great demonstration, to take place during the festivities at Shipka, had been organized by the Macedonians, his Excellency replied that he had no evidence to confirm it, but that the Bulgarian Government were determined to prevent any overt action on their part which could give offence to the Porte, and remarked that, now that General Tsoncheff was for the time disposed of, he looked upon his Committee as being virtually suppressed.

It is generally understood that the late energetic action of the Government is due to Russian influence in view of the approaching fêtes, and the Ottoman Commissioner told me some time ago that he regarded the presence of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch at Shipka as the best guarantee that there would be no movement in Macedonia this autumn.

The arrest of General Tsoncheff has not excited much feeling in the country. A meeting at Rustchuk on Sunday last to protest against it was attended by about 1,000 persons, and a movement for a similar demonstration here was set on foot last night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 247

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, September* 10, 1902.

AN article which Dr. Vouitch has admitted to be inspired has recently been published in the semi-official newspaper "Dnevnik," stating that in consequence of the sad incidents which are of daily occurrence, whereby the life and property of Servians inhabiting Old Servia are endangered, M. Grouitch, the Servian Representative at Constantinople, has been instructed to make strenuous representations to the Porte urging that the necessary steps may be taken to defend Servian citizens and to restore tranquillity and peace on the frontier.

It is further stated that Dr. Vouitch had asked the Montenegrin Government to give instructions to their Minister at Constantinople to make similar representations, and finally that the Russian Government had been approached in the same sense to support the measures taken by the two Governments.

The article adds that there can be no doubt that the Russian Government will comply with this request, if only on the ground that it had last year received a promise from the Porte, on the occasion of the incident at Kolashin, that steps would be taken to restore order and prevent outrages in that quarter.

On my mentioning this matter to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, he replied that his Government had now a cause of complaint of their own against the Turkish authorities, owing to the ill-treatment of the Kavass and servant of the newly-appointed Russian Consul at Mitrovitza on their arrival at that place to make arrangements for establishing a Consulate. It appears that they were sent away, on the ground that a Russian Consulate was not required, at the instance of Issa Bolyetinatz, a noted Albanian Chief, who has frequently resisted the authority of the Porte hitherto with impunity; he was frequently alluded to in my despatches last year in connection with the incident at Kolashin. His present attitude seems to be an additional proof of the inability of the Porte to control the Albanian element of the population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 248.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 15.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, September* 10, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the usual monthly Report on events in Macedonia during August.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador)
(Signed) G. BARCLAY.

Inclosure in No. 248.

Report on Events in Macedonia during the Month of August 1902.

Bulgar Bands.

THE activity of the Bulgar guerilla, after surviving the postponement of a general insurrection last spring, has not, as was expected, slackened during the harvest, and will now probably continue until stopped by winter. Their unfailing spirit is shown by the attack on a party of 30 Turkish regulars near Tchairli, in open country, by a band of 11 young Bulgars, of whom 9 were killed, 1 captured, and 1 escaped. They were all in uniform, with badges of the Bulgarian flag, a sabre, and a revolver, conjoined under a cross, with the device "Liberty or Death." Mr. Pissurica, August 1, 1902.

Late in July a small band of six was surrounded, while on a blackmailing tour, in Volak, a small village half Exarchist, half Patriarchist, between Drama and Serres. Sir A. Biliotti, August 17, 1902.

Official and Greek clerical information contradict the story that a priest, Triandaphyllis by name, had been thrown into a burning house by troops. He was in company with the band, by whom he was shot, possibly accidentally, and the body was left in the burning house when the survivors escaped, after a two days' siege, by tunnelling a passage through the party walls of the adjoining houses. Several soldiers and a passing peasant were killed; of the band, only the leader, but another was hunted down and killed next day near Plevna.

Sir A. Biliotti, August 18, 1902.

About the same date another small band was attacked near the Vardar railway bridge, an hour from Salonica, with a loss of one killed and a few wounded on either side. Many Committee papers fell into the hands of the authorities, one of which they allege to be instructions for the disguising of Committeemen in Turkish uniforms and for the perpetration of excesses which would thereby be laid to the account of the troops.

Montenegro.

Mr. Fontana, August 9, 1902.

An official report of the fight between Albanians and Montenegrins at Mokra (Gusinje), states that thirty-eight Albanians and a Turkish officer were killed or wounded and that, as surmised, the dispute arose over the land bought by the Sultan last year and ceded by him to Montenegro.

Constantinople, September 2, 1902.

No. 249.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, September* 15, 1902.

THE information contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant has already been communicated to me by the Greek Agent, who had received it from a private correspondent in Monastir; and various rumours to much the same effect are current.

Parties of Macedonians are constantly passing the frontier, and reports have been received that 140 soldiers have been ambushed and disarmed by a band under Colonel Yankoff, near Monastir.

Any revolutionary movement will be discountenanced by the Bulgarian Government, who desire to preserve tranquillity; they are receiving advice in this sense from the Russian Agent.

It is generally thought here that, though local disturbances may possibly occur, anything like a general insurrection is in the highest degree improbable.

No. 250.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 18.)

My Lord, *Athens, September* 10, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Zaïmis, whom I saw this morning, again showed some uneasiness with regard to the state of affairs in Macedonia. After alluding to the arrest of Tsoncheff and his companions, he went on to say that reports had just reached him that an insurrectionary outbreak had been planned for the 1st of next month; and, he added, that although his information was based on rumour only, he was, nevertheless, telegraphing it to M. Metaxas in London.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

No. 251.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 18.)

My Lord, *Athens, September 11, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, in consequence of the continued export of arms from this country to Macedonia, a Royal Decree has been issued, dated Copenhagen, the 28th August (10th September) last, totally prohibiting the export of arms and ammunition from all parts of Greece.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

No. 252.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, September 19, 1902.*

SARAFOFF, chief of the Revolutionary Committee, has been arrested at Nish and brought to Belgrade. As his visit was on private affairs, he has since been set at liberty.

Dr. Vouitch, who had left Belgrade on leave of absence, has been recalled suddenly, and has gone to see the King at Nish. It is thought that his return is in consequence of difficulties which have arisen in connection with the new loan.

No. 253.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September 20, 1902.*

I HAVE received a telegram, dated this morning, from the Acting Vice-Consul at Uskub, reporting that the railway and telegraph lines between Mitrovitza and Uskub were cut last night by Albanians. The railway line has been repaired, traffic only being four hours delayed.

Mr. Shipley adds that Hamdi Pasha leaves for Constantinople to-day, and that it is said that he has been definitely recalled.

No. 254.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 22.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September 16, 1902.*

AFTER receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant, I made inquiries of the French and Italian Embassies as to whether they had information confirming the reports received by the Greek Government respecting impending trouble in the Monastir district of the Balkan Peninsula.

I ascertained that the recent reports of the French and Italian Consuls at Monastir did not bear out those of the Greek Government, but, on the contrary, rather tended to show that there was, perhaps, a slight improvement in the general political situation owing to the energy and firmness of the Vali, who seems to be succesful in maintaining a relative degree of public order without allowing legitimate repression to degenerate into crime and outrages.

It is not unnatural, however, that the Greeks, who suffer severely at the hands of the Bulgarian Committees, should be apt to exaggerate their fears and to communicate them to their Government in the hope that representations at Sophia may do something to alleviate their sufferings.

The patriotic Russo-Bulgarian demonstrations at Shipka, which are announced to take place towards the end of this month, seem, moreover, eminently calculated to arouse Bulgarian feeling almost to fever heat in favour of their suffering brothers and coreligionists across the frontier. It is unlikely that the Revolutionary Committees will lose such an opportunity of provoking disturbances if they think they can turn this popular excitement in their favour,

On this ground I believe the Shipka demonstrations and festivities may be regarded with some anxiety. They are certainly disturbing the Ottoman Government very considerably.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

255.

Mr. Stronge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 25.)

My Lord, *Athens, September* 17, 1902.

M. ZAÏMIS told me to-day that the Bulgarians were again causing trouble in this country, and added, in reply to an inquiry on my part, that the police were on the track of fresh bands of marauders in Thessaly.

Whilst on this subject I may mention that a certain Dr. Tatarcheff, who is alleged to be an active Macedonian conspirator, was recently arrested at the Piræus on a charge of having been concerned in an attempt to murder a Greek subject named Sakellarios in the neighbourhood of Salonica about eighteen months ago. It is stated that he has just been released from prison in Asia Minor, where he had been confined in pursuance of a conviction for having given medical aid to the Macedonian insurgents, and that he was on his way to Salonica when arrested by the Greek police. M. Zaïmis, to whom I mentioned the matter in conversation, would not vouch for these details, but he told me that the matter was under investigation, and that, according to Greek law, the fact that the crime against a Greek subject, of which Tatarcheff was accused, was committed abroad, would not prevent his being tried in this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS STRONGE.

No. 256.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September* 25, 1902.

MACEDONIA. The following telegram, dated yesterday, has reached me this morning from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica:—

Troops have been sent to the districts of Vodena, Yenidje, and Ghevgheli, half-a-battalion to each of the two first and one battalion to the last-named, in consequence of a Bulgarian band having threatened to burn Christian villages and massacre inhabitants if they failed to take up arms at the first call. Fifteen hundred persons, the total population of two villages in the Ghevgheli district, have fled to the mountains.

No. 257.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 27.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, September* 23, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that M. Tcharicoff, the Russian Minister, who returned to Belgrade from leave of absence a few days ago, informs me that every precaution has been taken to prevent the approaching celebration at the Shipka Pass having any political character. With this object the speeches delivered on the occasion would, he said, be restricted.

The visit of the Grand Duke Nicholas to Constantinople, as being the Suzerain State, immediately after the ceremonies would, he said, go far to remove any misapprehension on the subject.

M. Tcharicoff mentioned that he himself had received an invitation, not as Russian Minister to Servia, but as having taken part in the Turkish war. He was not, however, able to accept it, having just returned from leave.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 258.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 29.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, September* 24, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that Boris Sarafoff, whose arrest and subsequent liberation were reported in my telegram of the 19th instant, has recently left Belgrade for Western Europe, where he intends to carry on his agitation for an autonomous Macedonia. His arrest is now stated to have been brought about by an over-zealous police official. It appears that he arrived at Nish from Bulgaria under a false name, and, on being interrogated by the Minister of the Interior, stated that he had left Bulgaria from fear of arrest, and in the hopes of being able to pass through Servia unperceived to Paris. He was liberated, but remained under police surveillance during the remainder of his stay.

I understand from a Russian source that Sarafoff's flight from Bulgaria is considered to be a proof that official Bulgaria is anxious to avoid all disturbances in Macedonia during the approaching celebrations at Shipka, and that this attitude is attributed to the peremptory injunctions given by Russia at Sophia.

Sarafoff's stay in Belgrade was not marked by any political agitation, possibly on account of the measures taken by the Government. It is only since his departure that an article has been published in one of the newspapers giving some account of his life and aspirations.

It is shown how, having been born in Macedonia but educated in Bulgaria, he devoted the first years of his public life to promoting the interests of Bulgaria in Macedonia, and encouraging the idea that Macedonia should belong to Bulgaria. Circumstances occurred which induced him to abandon the idea of increasing the influence of Bulgaria, and he is now devoting all his energies towards the formation of a new autonomous Balkan State, for which he has adopted the formula, borrowed from the Monroe doctrine, "Macedonia for the Macedonians." He fully realizes that his new views have made his position in Bulgaria untenable. He had, in fact, received an injunction to quit that country, as his energetic revolutionary methods in Macedonia had been the cause of strained relations between Turkey and Bulgaria.

Macedonia, he urges, does not require Bulgarian or Servian schoolmasters or priests, but only arms and troops. He notices with regret that the Bulgarians show more energy in Macedonia than the Servians, and suggests that the latter should make their influence more felt. He would prefer, however, that a Macedonian Committee should be formed in Belgrade to co-operate with the one in Bulgaria in the emancipation of Macedonia.

It will be unnecessary to quote from the article at greater length. Sarafoff's views have adherents in Servia among the more advanced statesmen, who consider that his idea of Macedonian autonomy is very praiseworthy, but that it should be carried out by pacific methods.

No. 259.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 29.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, September* 17, 1902.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that at M. Daneff's diplomatic reception yesterday, the first he has held for more than a month, I asked his Excellency what his views were on the situation in Macedonia. I said that His Majesty's Government had received a report that a general rising was decided on for the 18th September (o. s.), and asked whether any similar information had reached him.

M. Daneff said that, in his opinion, a general insurrection was quite out of the question, and he did not believe that any local disturbances, except on a very small scale, were to be apprehended. He admitted that of late the numbers of revolutionists passing the frontier had been rather larger than usual, but he scouted the idea of the existence of bands of 150 or 200 persons. Possibly there might be one or two of as many as fifty, but with the forces which the Turks had in the country it was simply impossible for them to keep together for many days, and they were forced to break up into small parties of eight or ten, when their operations degenerated into mere

brigandage. The reports which appeared almost daily in the Sophia papers of combats on a large scale with the troops were quite imaginary, and were published by the Tsoncheffists' Committee. He believed, however, that there was some foundation for the report of Colonel Yankoff's fight, but the figures were grossly exaggerated. As for Boris Sarafoff, he has lost all influence.

No. 260.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September 18, 1902.*

THE report of the arrest of Boris Sarafoff at Nish, which appeared in several of this morning's papers, has caused some sensation in Sophia, and a good deal of curiosity is expressed as to the reasons which can have actuated the Servian Government to take this step.

The explanation was furnished to me by Ali Ferruh Bey, the Ottoman Commissioner, who told me that having had reason to suspect that Sarafoff was meditating a journey to Servia with the object of gaining recruits for the Macedonian cause, he had had him watched; a few days ago he lost touch with him, and he had telegraphed to Hilmi Pasha, the Turkish Minister at Belgrade, suggesting that, in case Sarafoff had gone to Servia, the Servian Government should be asked to effect an arrest if anything suspicious should occur. Sarafoff had been recognized at Nish travelling with a false passport, and the Servian police had therefore arrested him; no sufficient evidence had been forthcoming to warrant his imprisonment, and Hilmi Pasha had just telegraphed to Ali Ferruh Bey that it had been decided to expel Sarafoff to Hungary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 261.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September 18, 1902.*

THE inquiry into the Dragalevtsi affair has not yet been completed, but all but ten of the band, whose capture I had the honour to report in my despatch of the 27th ultimo, have been released, and it is expected that the remaining prisoners will not be detained more than a few days longer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 262.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 29.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, September 22, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of the despatch of the 10th instant, by which your Lordship was so good as to transmit to me, for my observations, copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires in London, urging the necessity of exercising energetic pressure on the Bulgarian Government to induce them to dissolve the Macedonian Committees in this country.

Of the form which the pressure contemplated in Hamid Bey's note would assume I am of course ignorant, but I fear that no mere friendly representations would be successful. The arguments which the Bulgarian Government would advance would probably be to the effect that since the Macedonian Congress of August last dissension has robbed the Committees of much of their power; that their operations in Macedonia are much exaggerated; that, if suppressed, the present Committees would be resuscitated under different names, or replaced by secret Societies far more difficult to deal with, and that by arresting General Tsoncheff the Government have quite recently given a proof of their desire to observe a correct attitude towards Turkey, and this in spite of the irritation caused in this country by the ill-treatment and persecution of its Bulgarian subjects by the Porte.

Apart from any question as to the necessity for or expediency of the measures desired by the Porte, it is open to doubt whether any Bulgarian Ministry, even if willing, would be able to suppress the Committees; the national feelings and aspirations in the Macedonian question are warmly held by all the political groups—excluding the Mussulmans—in the Chamber, and the knowledge that the Government contemplated the dissolution of the Macedonian organization would raise so great an outcry that the Government might well be compelled to resign or drop the measure.

No. 263.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September 24, 1902.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to report that General Tsoncheff, Vice-Resident of the Macedonian Committee, has escaped from Drenovo, where he had been interned since his arrest at Dubnitza. That this should have occurred is not surprising, seeing that Drenovo is the General's birthplace, where he must have had any number of friends willing to assist him, and that the restraint of his movements implied by "internement" consisted merely in presenting himself once or twice daily at the police-station.

Another large armed band of Macedonians has been brought into Sophia; the insurgents, to the number of fifty, were captured in the neighbourhood of Radomir, and were supposed to be intending to pass the frontier near Dubnitza.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 264.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 29.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September 21, 1902.*

IN his despatch of the 26th August Mr. de Bunsen reported the formation of a Technical Commission which was shortly to visit Macedonia to effect improvements in the industries, commerce, agriculture, public instruction, &c. of the vilayets of the province. I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a Circular respecting the duties which it is intended the Commission shall discharge and relating also to certain administrative and judicial reforms prescribed by Imperial Iradé.

As your Lordship is aware, this Commission was the first of the three recommendations made in the Report drawn up in July by the Special Commission of Ministers under the presidency of the Grand Vizier and approved by the Council of Ministers, as reported in Mr. de Bunsen's despatch of the 11th August. The second recommendation—that larger powers of initiative should be given to the Valis—has, as is evident from the Circular inclosed, not been adopted by His Imperial Majesty. The third suggestion—that the gendarmerie should be reorganized—is not entirely ignored by the Circular, but no special undertaking is made.

In general the vague and unmethodic character of the document gives no great promise of improvement. Such development of Public Works, Public Instruction, and even of the Judiciary, as it contemplates is impossible or at best illusory until law and order be secured by the sufficient and regular payment of troops and officials and by the investment of competent Valis with adequate powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 264.

Circular respecting Administrative and Judicial Reforms prescribed by Imperial Iradé.

UNE Commission Technique sera envoyée dans les vilayets de Salonique, Kossovo, et Monastir, avec mission de déterminer les institutions qu'il y aurait lieu d'établir pour donner un nouvel essor aux travaux d'utilité publique et pour assurer la prospérité du pays et l'extension de l'agriculture d'inspecter les ponts et chaussées

qui seront construits, développer la situation commerciale et économique tant dans l'intérieur que sur le littoral des dits vilayets et de faciliter le service de navigation dans ces parages.

Un ingénieur hydrographe et un employé du Ministère des Finances chargés, le premier d'étudier les travaux d'irrigations fluviales à exécuter, et le second, de veiller à la perception des impôts, feront partie de la dite Commission. De nouvelles écoles primaires et secondaires seront créées dans les vilayets précités et il sera procédé à l'organisation des Tribunaux et de la gendarmerie.

Les personnes qui se livreraient à des agissements dans le but de troubler l'ordre et la tranquillité publics sans tenir compte des recommandations qui leur seraient faites par les autorités Impériales et dont les actes entraîneraient, d'après la loi, leur responsabilité, seront provisoirement éloignées du pays en vue de leur amendement moral.

Dans le cas où les Valis jugeraient nécessaire de requérir l'assistance des forces armées, ils aviseront d'urgence à qui de droit, conformément aux instructions qu'ils recevront du Gouvernement Impérial, auquel ils auront à se référer préalablement par le télégraphe.

La Sublime Porte a muni les Gouverneurs-Généraux des vilayets susmentionnés d'ordres en conséquence et leur a recommandé d'une façon instante de mettre sans retard à exécution les mesures dont il s'agit. Les Valis ont été invités en même temps à créer des Tribunaux dans les localités où l'existence de pareilles institutions est nécessaire, afin que ces Tribunaux procèdent, conformément aux prescriptions de la loi, au jugement des criminels et déterminent les peines que ceux-ci auraient encourues. Ils auront à faire remettre à la justice ceux des dits criminels qui refuseraient de comparaître devant la juridiction compétente et à adopter, conformément aux hautes intentions de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, des dispositions propres à mettre toutes les classes de la population à l'abri de procédés vexatoires de toutes sortes.

(Translation.)

A TECHNICAL Commission will be sent into the vilayets of Salonica, Kossovo, and Monastir, to decide on the institutions which it would be desirable to establish to give a fresh impetus to works of public utility and to assure the prosperity of the country and the extension of agriculture, to inspect the bridges and roads which are to be constructed, to improve the commercial and economic situation, both in the interior and along the coasts of the said vilayets and to facilitate navigation.

A hydrographic engineer and an official of the Ministry of Finance will be attached to the said Commission, the former to study irrigation works to be carried out the latter to superintend the collection of taxes. New primary and secondary schools will be formed in the afore-mentioned vilayets, and steps will be taken for the organization of the Tribunals and of the gendarmerie.

Any persons taking part in movements with the object of disturbing the public order and tranquillity in defiance of the warnings which may be given them by the Imperial authorities, and whose acts render them liable to prosecution, shall be provisionally removed from the country with a view to their reformation.

In cases where the Valis may consider it necessary to call in the assistance of the military, they shall notify the proper authority without delay, in conformity with the instructions which they receive from the Imperial Government, to which they will first have to refer by telegraph.

The Sublime Porte has furnished the Governors-General of the afore-mentioned vilayets with orders in consequence and has given them strict instructions to put in force the measures in question without delay. The Valis have been instructed, at the same time, to establish Tribunals wherever their existence is necessary, in order that these Tribunals may proceed, in conformity with the injunctions of the Law, to try criminals and decide to what penalties they have rendered themselves liable. They will have to bring to justice those of the said criminals who may refuse to appear before the proper Court, and in conformity with the high intentions of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to take the necessary steps for protecting all classes of the population from persecution of any kind.

No. 265.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 30.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne, et pour se conformer aux instructions qu'il a reçues de son Gouvernement, a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie que Sarafoff, Chef du Comité Révolutionnaire Bulgare, étant arrivé dernièrement à Nisch, a été arrêté en cette ville et conduit sous escorte à Belgrade. Les papiers qui ont été saisis sur lui ont établi qu'il est en rapports suivis avec le Ministre de la Guerre Bulgare, et que les poursuites qui ont été dirigées par le Gouvernement Princier contre le Comité précité sont illusoires.

Hamid Bey a pour devoir d'ajouter que les officiers de la milice Bulgare qui ayant quitté le service se sont affiliés aux Comités Révolutionnaires, ont prêté serment dans le Monastère de Rilo, en Bulgarie.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,
Londres, le 29 Septembre, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and, in pursuance of the instructions which he has received from his Government, has the honour to inform his Lordship that Sarafoff, Head of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committee, having lately arrived at Nish, was arrested in that town and brought under escort to Belgrade. The papers which have been seized on him have established that he is in constant communication with the Bulgarian Minister of War, and that the proceedings which have been taken by the Government of His Highness against the afore-mentioned Committee are illusory.

It is Hamid Bey's duty to add that the officers of the Bulgarian Militia who have left the service and enrolled themselves in the Revolutionary Committees, took the oath in the Monastery of Rilo, in Bulgaria.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
September 29, 1902.

No. 266.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Marling.**

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 30, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires communicating information which is stated to have reached the Turkish Government in regard to the recent arrest of Boris Sarafoff, and the papers found in his possession.†

I request that you will furnish me with your observations on Hamid Bey's note.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 267.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 3.)

My Lord, *Therapia, September* 28, 1902.

I CAUSED inquiries to be made at the Sublime Porte in respect to the incident reported in my telegram of the 25th instant.

According to the version of the Ottoman Government, troops were dispatched to liberate some gendarmes who had been surrounded by Bulgarian bands. They effected their purpose without loss of life. Two battalions of regulars and reserves were drafted into Vodena, Yenidje, and Ghevgheli, and this measure has had a

* Also to Sir G. Bonham.

† No. 265.

reassuring effect on the Moslem and Christian populations of these districts, where all is now reported to be quiet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 268.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 1, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting dissensions between certain factions among the Bulgar bands now operating in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 268.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, September* 20, 1902.

MR. PISSURICA reported to me on the 16th instant the following details:—

On the 1st instant there was a collision on Mount Tournovo, situated at three hours from Florina, between the villages of Pissoderi and Smirtech, between the Bulgarian bands of Tsiakalaroff, consisting of thirty men, and that of Koteff, of twenty-two men. The arrival of a Turkish detachment of troops put to flight the combatants after two hours' fighting, the result of which was that five out of the band of thirty and three out of the band of twenty-two were killed. This collision rendered abortive a plan which had been concocted, it would seem, by Tsiakalaroff (who is Petroff's successor) for murdering on the night of the Sultan's birthday, when the streets of Castoria were expected to be especially crowded, the Kaïmakam, the Greek Archbishop, the Head of Police, the Head of the Gendarmerie, the Juge d'Instruction, and one or two Greek schoolmasters in that town. It would seem that Tsiakalaroff had a few years previously sent to Castoria four of his band for the purpose of coming to an arrangement with their partisans in the town for the execution of this scheme. Seeing that their chief did not keep his appointment, and suspecting some mischief, three of the brigands managed to make good their escape, but the fourth, being unsuccessful, and fearing the consequences in case of discovery, turned King's evidence, and it is from him that the foregoing details of the plot came to light. On being acquainted with them, the Beys and Mussulmans generally of Castoria were greatly incensed, but no fear of an onslaught on Christians was entertained, owing to the severe injunctions given all over the vilayet, in order to prevent all conflict between the two religions. The main reason for dissension between the two Bulgarian Chiefs was the divergence of opinion as to the treatment of Orthodox Christians or Patriarchists. But Dontcheff not only accused the other party of injustice and cruelty towards Christians, whether Patriarchists or Exarchists, but also of cheating the people and of stealing the money collected from them for political purposes. Furthermore, he insists on the bands limiting their attacks to bad Turks and to the Ottoman authorities, and not to compel, by violence or threats, the Greeks not to maintain their schools and churches, which Tsiakalaroff, as successor of Petroff, wished to erase from all the villages in the vilayet. In the district of Castoria alone, the Greek schools of twenty-two villages having been closed this year and Bulgarian schools substituted, the Archbishop of that district had gone lately to Janina to confer with his colleague and the competent authorities on these proceedings of Sarafoff's partisans, which, if allowed to continue, will certainly have as a result the disappearance of all official existence, in the vilayet of the Monastir, of the Patriarchate. This state of things suggests to Mr. Pissurica the following observations, some of which he has submitted in former correspondence: that the organizations of the Macedonian Committee are without consistence and quite superficial. As a consequence, we now see two bands fighting between themselves, and vilifying one another in the eyes of the population for whose sake they were supposed to be sacrificing themselves. We see, besides, native members of these bands, when in personal danger, denouncing their comrades to the very authorities they were to annihilate most of. The leaders of bands have no real merit, but are selfish and capricious, forming grand schemes without having

the means of carrying them out. As it is, the seven or eight bands, which exist in the Vilayet of Monastir have, to the delight of the Turkish authorities, joined in almost equal numbers the opposite camps. This is a great blow to the prestige of the cause they have taken up, and will completely discourage the natives whose hopes had been awakened, while if they continue this sanguinary strife, they may end by being annihilated. The consequence for the majority of the Christian agricultural classes will be utter ruin, and a more mournful existence, owing to the Mussulman population, on the relaxation of the severe measures now adopted by the Government, finding an opportune moment for giving vent to feelings of hatred and revenge which the present proceedings of Bulgarian bands is awakening in their hearts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 269.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October 1, 1902.*

WITH reference to my telegram of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting damage done to the railway near Mitrovitza, in Kossovo Vilayet, by Albanians, as a demonstration against the proposed establishment of a Russian Vice-Consulate there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 269.

Consul Shipley to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

Sir, *Uskub, September 21, 1902.*

THE Albanians tore up the line and cut the wires between Mitrovitza and Uskub on the night of the 19th instant. The Company's engineer happening to be near the spot the damage was repaired, causing only three and a-half hours delay to the train from Mitrovitza. The damage was slight, only two rails on either side being removed, while the screws and bolts were loosened for some distance. This fact, taken together with the place chosen for the outrage, proves that there was no intention of harming the trains, but merely of demonstrating against the Government. Had the Albanians wished to derail the train, they could have chosen a spot further down the line away from the station and down the steep incline, where the train could not have been stopped in time.

The offender is a certain Mustapha, whose eldest son was shot lately by the Mitrovitza patrol, and whose second son is in prison here. He threatens to repeat the outrage unless he receives compensation for the former and the release of the latter.

This is the first time the line has actually been tampered with though often threatened, and the danger lies in the fact that once the Albanians have tried it and found it so easy they will, unless Mustapha is severely dealt with, make a practice of such demonstrations.

The notorious Chiefs Riza Bey and Bairam Zur are both in Uskub at the present moment, presumably to deal with the question of the Russian Consulate at Mitrovitza. The latter insisted on having a trolly to take him to Mitrovitza last night, but it was refused. He wished, he said, to assist the Government in keeping the Albanians massed in the town quiet. Shemsi Pasha is doing that at present with his troops reinforced by two regiments from the neighbourhood of Mitrovitza. He wrote, however, recently to Constantinople saying he needed another ten battalions, and that even then he might be overwhelmed. But Shemsi Pasha is well known to be hand in glove with Issa Bolyetinatz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 270.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 6.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 1, 1902.

IN continuation of my despatch of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General concerning the insurgent bands that have lately appeared at Ghevgheli, Vodena, &c.

It would seem from Sir Alfred Biliotti's despatch that the reports of the disturbances in this district were much exaggerated, but if it be true, as is alleged by the Sublime Porte, that fifty-two insurgents were killed and 130 wounded by the troops sent against them, the movement must have extended over a considerable country.

A feeling of unrest is reported from most parts of Macedonia, but I hardly think any general outbreak is to be feared at this season. In another month the brigands will be driven from the hills by the inclemency of the weather, and Colonel Yankoff, who seems a formidable leader, will be obliged to leave the country or surrender.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 270.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, September* 28, 1902.

THE Bulgarian bands which threatened the peasants are said to consist together of from 100 to 150 men, in the districts of Vodena, Ghevgheli, &c. In the village of Tussoum (Ghevgheli) one tax collector, one mounted gendarme, and a rural guard, all Mussulmans, having been murdered for exactions I am told, the bands availed themselves of the circumstance to frighten the inhabitants with the presumed severe measures which the Government were going to take against the whole village in consequence of the murder in question. A similar argument was used towards the inhabitants of the village of Pozarsko, in the Nahie of Karadjova (Vodena), near which the band had killed two and wounded as many Mussulman wood-cutters. In both cases they induced the whole of the inhabitants to take to the mountains. These examples were about to be followed by a few other villages when the arrival of the troops against whom the Christians have no complaints (not so with the gendarmerie) put a stop to the panic which was beginning to pervade the country. The coincidence of some battalions of Redifs having been called out for one month's drill at the same time as these incidents were taking place, and the fact that they were provided by exception with shoes and all implements of complete mobilization, has not little contributed to lead the population to the belief that the movement of the bands was unusually serious.

Wild news of the emigration of more peasants, of the burning by the bands of villages, and even of a number of their inhabitants for refusing to obey their commands, conveyed to me in the evening by respectable natives, were contradicted the next morning by the same parties, with regrets for having misled me, as they had been deceived themselves.

Yesterday the Vali assured me that the inhabitants of the only two villages who had emigrated on the 21st had returned on the 25th to their houses, which during their absence had been taken care of by the soldiers; that in the movement of troops no natives or soldiers were wounded, contrary to the rumours spread about—in fact, that not a shot was fired on either side, and that the country had resumed its normal aspect.

The last information is confirmed to me by a British subject residing at Vodena, who, on the day after the outbreak, represented the situation in that district as very alarming, but wrote on the 26th instant to his brother in Salonica that perfect tranquillity prevailed in Vodena and surrounding country.

The Vali having informed me that troops had been stationed also in the districts of Doïran, Kilkish, &c., in all three battalions, forming a belt from Vodena to Serres, I could not help pointing out to his Excellency that if my repeated suggestion for such an occupation by troops had been followed the present incident would not have taken place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 271.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 8.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne et a l'honneur d'informer sa Seigneurie qu'il est chargé par son Gouvernement de lui faire savoir que d'après des communications du Gouverneur-Général du vilayet de Monastir relativement aux bandes de brigands Bulgares, qui ont fait leur apparition dans certaines localités de cette province, les Comités Révolutionnaires ont, en exécution de leur programme subversif, donné des instructions aux bandes qu'ils ont organisées pour qu'elles commettent non seulement des actes de pillage, et de destruction de toutes sortes, mais encore qu'elles mettent à mort traîtreusement les habitants Musulmans qu'elles rencontreraient ainsi que les Notables Grecs.

La révélation de ces faits résulte de la saisie de papiers compromettants saisis sur la personne de prisonniers Bulgares.

Hamid Bey a aussi à porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie que le Ministre de Grèce à Constantinople a dernièrement entretenu son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de cet état de choses et lui a signalé le meurtre par des brigands Bulgares de plusieurs notabilités Grecques.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,
Londres, le 7 Octobre, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and has the honour to inform his Lordship that he has been charged by his Government to bring to his Lordship's notice that, according to communications of the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Monastir relative to the bands of Bulgarian brigands which have appeared in certain localities of that province, the Revolutionary Committees, in execution of their programme of rebellion, have given instructions to the bands which they have organized, not merely to commit acts of pillage and destruction of every kind, but, further, to put to death treacherously the Mussulman inhabitants whom they may come across as well as Greek Notables.

These facts have been revealed by the seizure of compromising papers found on the persons of Bulgarian prisoners.

Hamid Bey has also to inform his Lordship that the Greek Minister at Constantinople has lately brought this state of affairs to the notice of his Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and has informed him of the murder of several Greek notables by Bulgarian brigands.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
October 7, 1902.

No. 272.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 10.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance du Marquis de Lansdowne qu'il a reçu pour instructions de son Gouvernement de faire part à sa Seigneurie de ce qui suit relativement aux agissements des Comités Révolutionnaires Bulgares.

D'après les informations les plus récentes reçues par le Gouvernement Impérial les dits Comités ont accentué leurs menées subversives, et les effets pernicieux de cette agitation sont ressentis depuis quelques jours dans les provinces Ottomanes voisines de la Principauté. La vie et la sécurité des habitants paisibles, tant Musulmans que Chrétiens, de certains districts sont menacés par les attaques continuelles des affiliés des dits Comités.

Les autorités Impériales Ottomanes ne manquent pas, il est vrai, de prendre des mesures répressives sévères à l'égard de ces agitateurs; mais comme ceux-ci, toutes les fois qu'ils sont poursuivis, repassent la ligne de démarcation et jouissent de la plus complète impunité sur le territoire Bulgare les mesures dont il s'agit sont restées inefficaces.

Les démarches que le Gouvernement Impérial ne cesse de faire auprès du

Gouvernement Princier tant pour la punition de ces bandits que pour la dissolution des Comités Révolutionnaires qui fonctionnent en Bulgarie au vu et au su des autorités Princières sont restées jusqu'ici sans résultat.

Hamid Bey est chargé de faire observer à sa Seigneurie que l'inaction injustifiable de la Principauté ne s'explique nullement et que les lois d'aucun État, quel que soit le régime qui le gouverne, ne permettent l'existence, encore moins le fonctionnement d'Associations formées dans le but de troubler l'ordre et la tranquillité dans les pays voisins et de pousser les populations de ces pays à se soulever contre leurs autorités légitimes.

La nécessité de mettre sans retard un terme à la situation intolérable ci-dessus signalée impose au Gouvernement Impérial l'obligation d'attirer encore une fois la sérieuse attention de sa Seigneurie sur ce qui précède et de la prier instamment de faire entendre sa voix autorisée à Sophia pour assurer la dissolution des Comités précités et l'adoption de mesures efficaces propres à empêcher les affiliés de ces Comités de se livrer, soit ouvertement, soit secrètement, à leurs agissements criminels.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 10 *Octobre*, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires has the honour to inform the Marquess of Lansdowne that he has received instructions from his Government to bring to his Lordship's notice the following facts in regard to the proceedings of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees :—

According to the latest information received by the Imperial Government, the said Committees have become more active in their revolutionary proceedings, and the pernicious effects of this agitation have been felt for the last few days in the Ottoman provinces bordering on the Principality. The life and security of the peaceable inhabitants, both Mussulman and Christian, in certain districts, are menaced by the incessant attacks of members of the said Committees.

The Imperial Ottoman authorities do not fail, it is true, to take strong repressive measures against these agitators. But as the latter, whenever they are pursued, cross the frontier and enjoy complete immunity on Bulgarian soil, the measures in question have remained ineffectual.

The representations which the Imperial Government never cease to make to the Government of His Highness, both for the punishment of these bandits and for the dissolution of the Revolutionary Committees, which work in Bulgaria in full view and with the cognizance of the Prince's authorities, have hitherto been without result.

Hamid Bey is instructed to point out to his Lordship that the unjustifiable inaction of the Principality is totally inexplicable, and that the laws of no State, whatever its Government may be, allow of the existence, not to speak of the active working, of associations, formed with the object of disturbing order and tranquillity in neighbouring countries, and of inciting the population of those countries to revolt against their legitimate authorities.

The need for putting an immediate stop to the intolerable situation here set forth, imposes on the Imperial Government the obligation of once more calling his Lordship's serious attention to what is stated above, and of urgently begging him to use his powerful influence at Sophia to obtain the dissolution of the afore-mentioned Committees and the adoption of effectual measures to prevent the members of these Committees from continuing, either openly or secretly, their criminal proceedings.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
October 10, 1902.

No. 273.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 12, 1902.

HIS Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica telegraphs as follows :—

"Mr. Theodorides, from Serres, gives report of rebels getting more numerous. The districts between Malesh and Djumabala especially are affected. Entire villages have risen.

It is said that troops are coming from the capital as well as from Smyrna.

No. 274.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 12.)

My Lord, *Sophia, September* 28, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 24th instant, I have the honour to report that, after his escape from Drenovo, General Tsoncheff, Vice-President of the Macedonian Committee, came to Sophia and was at once arrested. He is to be sent back to Drenovo, where he will be kept under much stricter surveillance than before.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 275.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, October* 12, 1902.

I HEAR that General Tsoncheff has escaped into Macedonia, and that he is determined to do something noteworthy.

I have informed His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

No. 276.

Mr. Marling to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 13.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October* 4, 1902.

I ASKED M. Daneff at his weekly reception this morning what news he had of the reported insurrection in Macedonia. His Excellency replied that he had not had time, since his return from Shipka, to read his latest "Consular" reports, and as the Bulgarian Government did not employ the telegraph with their agents in European Turkey, he was not acquainted with the latest European developments. I observed that the numbers of killed and wounded among the insurgents in the Vodena district, quoted as official by more than one paper, seemed to indicate a very serious state of affairs, and said that Colonel Yankoff had obviously utilized the occasion of the Shipka celebrations to persuade the revolutionists that a resolute combined movement would, at this moment compel intervention from outside on their behalf, and I added that it was greatly to be deplored that so dangerous a man should have been allowed to escape.

M. Daneff agreed that Colonel Yankoff had tried to profit by the situation, but he must have been well aware of the very slender chances he had of success, for he was in relations with the Tsoncheff Committee, who knew that they would get no support either from the Bulgarian Government or from Russia, or from the Prince. M. Daneff was evidently aware how persistently rumour connects the Prince's name with the Committee, for he repeated with emphasis "or from the Prince, as I can assure you from personal knowledge."

His Excellency went on to say, as usual, that the newspaper accounts were much exaggerated, and that the numbers of the insurgents, acting under Yankoff (the "Reformi" has put them at 3,000) were imaginary. He admitted, however, that on the Albanian side and in the south the Monastir Vilayet was in a condition not far from anarchy, but said that it was absurd to speak of a general rising when the other parts of Macedonia were in their normal condition. He concluded his remarks by asserting that with the large forces which the Turkish Government has at its disposal in the disturbed districts, he felt no apprehensions that the movement would spread.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

No. 277.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 13.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October* 6, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a report of events in Macedonia for September, prepared by Mr. Young, Third Secretary of this Embassy.

Anxiety has been felt in official circles here at the recrudescence and number of the insurrectionary bands throughout Macedonia, and the increase of activity of the revolutionary movement has been attributed to the demonstrations at Shipka, but the Government seems to be confident in their ability to put down insurrection with the regular troops, numbering about 80,000 men, now scattered throughout the Peninsula, which have, moreover, recently been augmented by 16 battalions of reservists. The Austrian Ambassador informs me that such information as he has received from his Consuls does not point to any general outbreak at present, and it may be anticipated that with the approach of winter the Bulgar bands, who are now scattered throughout the country, will be forced to disperse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 277.

Report by Mr. Young on the Condition of Macedonia during September, 1902.

THERE has been a considerable recrudescence of activity during September, both in the Bulgar and Albanian areas of disturbance. This coincidence seems to have caused foreign opinion frequently to confound two movements, which, though similar in origin and method, are contradictory in their immediate results and ultimate aims. Both originate in an assertion of political independence, and of an exclusive title to territory occupied in common with other subject races, and the method in both cases is resistance to administrative authority, and coercion of the other Rayahs. But the immediate result in the case of the Albanians has been the retention of a large measure of autonomy, and the acquisition of an increasing share in the government of the Empire; in the case of the Bulgars, an absolute exclusion from all local administration, and a régime, which, between coercion and corruption, comes near the limit of toleration even of a Macedonian peasant. The reason of this difference lies in the divergence of the ultimate aims of the movements: that of the Bulgars, from external racial and political attractions, is centrifugal and disruptive of the Ottoman Empire, whereas the Albanians aspire to securing and extending their privileges by means of their peculiar position in the Empire. Albanian disorders, consequently, mainly affect the Sultan and their neighbours, the Serbs and Bulgars of Macedonia, but the Bulgar campaign involves, sooner or later, a change in the political *status quo*.

Information received early in the month from Greek sources predicted a rising throughout Monastir about the 18th September (the 1st October). A Military Council was called at the Palace to discuss the situation, and warnings were sent to the local Commandants, but it was not thought necessary to reinforce the garrisons. Recent rumours and newspaper reports would indicate that a sort of rising is going on, but official information only shows that recent fights with bands, and flights of villagers to the hills, have involved rather larger numbers than usual.

Colonel Yankoff.

Sir A. Biliotti, August 30, 1902.

The Consul-General at Salonica reported early in the month the passage across the Vardar of a large band in Bulgarian uniform, which had afterwards gone south. This was probably one of those which had been operating in Malesh mountain, under Colonel Yankoff since July. Soon after the newspapers reported that he had surrounded and disarmed a body of regulars near Perlepe, which, however, has not been confirmed, and that parties under his orders had fought on the 30th August and the 3rd September near Salonica, losing, on the first occasion, 9 killed, 1 wounded, and 1 prisoner. Newspapers also report fighting at Bagenzi [Ghevgheli], 4 Bulgars killed; at Bugurevo, 15 miles from Salonica, where 2 were killed; and at Tröinovo,

where the Turks are said to have lost heavily. Yankoff himself is said to have been in the fight near Vodena about the 26th, when he lost, by the Turkish official account, 52 killed and 130 wounded; the Turkish loss is computed at about 50.

Prospects of General Rising.

These operations are said to be more strategic than any previous action of the bands, and fuller information might show them to be more important than they seem, but they do not imply an insurrection. The only new element of danger is that Yankoff may not only give the guerilla campaign the coherence and command it has hitherto conspicuously lacked, but may also prove to be the looked-for popular leader. The call to arms just issued by Yankoff, unless it is only directed at the public outside Macedonia, would mean that he now considered his position with the Macedonian peasants strong enough to put to the test. As little is known of the success of his campaigns in Malesh and Monastir, and nothing at all of his influence with the peasants, it is impossible to say yet whether his appeal will meet with response; more probably it will be considered either premature or "postiche." The Consul-General at Salonica writes reassuringly on the attitude of the peasants, to the effect that it is untrue that there has been any general exodus from the villages; that in many cases it was stopped by the troops, and that at Tassum (Ghevgheli) and Pozharsko (Vodena) it took place only from fear of punishment for murders by the bands, and that the fugitives have since returned. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that 1,500 persons had taken to the hills in the Ghevgheli district on account of the violence of the bands; the Bulgarian papers say on account of the approach of the troops. Bulgar Petitions complain of murders by Moslems, of injustice and corruption of officials, especially tithe-farmers, of the free quartering of troops, and of Albanian raids. Sir A. Biliotti, September 28, 1902. Sir A. Biliotti, September 13, 1902.

The Consul-General, while admitting the existence of abuses, recalls recent cases in which Albanian brigands have been put down by the Vali's action (*vide* August Report), to which may be added newspaper information of the putting of £T. 100 on the head of Islam Onbashi, the repulse of Feyzullah-Fettah, and the tacit amnesty accorded to the Bulgar village Kuveni for poisoning Muharrem Osman and his band. To the list annexed to one of the Petitions of twenty-one murders and eight assaults, in which Bulgars of the villages round Monastir were victims during the last eighteen months, Sir A. Biliotti appends a list of fifty-four Christians and thirty-two Moslems murdered during the last two years by Bulgars.

Dissensions among the Bands.

In the absence of any central control the jealousy between Sarafoff and Doncho, which was an element in the Stone case, has broken out again, ostensibly over a difference of opinion as to the treatment of the Monastir Greeks. Doncho is opposed to the present policy of eviction and coercion, and wishes only to act against Moslems. The quarrel led to a fight near Florina on the 1st September, which was stopped, after a loss of eight killed, by the approach of troops.

As though in answer to recent attacks on Macedonian prisons, twenty-one Bulgar prisoners were released on the anniversary of the Sultan's accession. One of them, Dr. Tatarcheff, was shortly after arrested at Athens on a charge of complicity in the murder of Dr. Sakelarios, a Greek subject, near Salonica. As the accused is an Ottoman subject, and the crime was on Turkish territory, the arrest seems as little justified in international law as the protest since made by the Bulgarian Government.

Albanians in Old Servia.

The Russians appointed a Russian Consul at Mitrovitza. The Albanians as early as last November declared they would resist this innovation, and the Porte, for its part, had delayed recognizing M. Stcherbin, and had taken no steps to force the town to receive him. Consequently when his cavasses arrived from Scutari they were, within a few hours, forced to leave for Uskub. The Russian press took the matter up strongly, and called for Consulates, with large Cossack guards at Ipek, Jakova, and Novi-Bazar, and the Russian Embassy soon overcame the reluctance of the Porte to issue the Consul's exequatur. The opposition of the Albanians was headed by the political brigand, Issa Bolietinatz. With him was joined an Albanian,

Mustapha, with a feud against the authorities. His son fired at a patrol, and was shot; he, therefore, shot the mail escort the next day, for which his second son was arrested. He thereupon took advantage of the excitement about the Consul to cut the wires, and raise some rails on the Mitrovitza line, and send an insolent message to the authorities. Previous to this Shemsi Pasha had professed to be unable to cope with the situation without large reinforcements, but the cutting of communications by a disaffected and defiant outlaw required a change of policy, and once more it became evident that the Turks can perfectly well deal with the Servian-Albanians when they please. Three battalions and a battery of artillery were sent in pursuit of Mustapha, and two villages, Kopreva and Bravanik, were burnt, and the Chiefs' towers destroyed. M. Stcherbin is still in Constantinople, but, after the excitement has somewhat subsided, he will, no doubt, proceed to his post.

Mr. Shipley, September 20, 1902.

Hamdi Pasha, the frontier Commissioner, has been recalled, and left for Constantinople.

Mr. Shipley, September 22, 1902.

The battalion in garrison at Berane mutinied for pay, and started for Mitrovitza. The artillery batteries have all changed places, it is supposed in order to enable the officers to obtain fresh local credit.

Sir A. Biliotti, September 25, 1902.

Italy has established a Consulate at Uskub, and appointed Baron E. Rossi. M. Nedkoff has been appointed Bulgarian commercial agent, in place of M. Youroukoff, transferred to Serres, where the Commercial Agency has been reopened as a sequel to the incident reported in June and July.

No. 278.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 13.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, October* 8, 1902.

THE recent celebrations at the Shipka Pass could not but excite considerable interest in Belgrade, and notwithstanding the tranquillizing assurances given on the occasion, the suggestion has been made that the object of Russia is to restore the territorial arrangements of the Treaty of San Stefano which, on account of the rivalry between Bulgaria and Servia, would naturally not be acceptable to this country.

It must be admitted that the language held subsequently by General Ignatieff at Sophia, as reported in the newspapers, gives some colour to this suggestion, and there seems to be little doubt that the Macedonian Committees have been taking advantage of the celebration to organize insurrections in the southern parts of Macedonia.

As far as can be judged from Belgrade, the situation in Macedonia is in some ways more dangerous than usual, principally on account of the unwonted activity displayed by the Macedonian Committees in the late autumn, which, as stated above, may be attributed to the opportunity which they expected would be afforded them by the Shipka celebrations. At the same time, I understand that the accounts published of the outrages and excesses have been greatly exaggerated, and that sensational telegrams produced with the avowed object of provoking the intervention of the Powers should be received with the utmost caution.

A meeting of Macedonians in Belgrade was to have been held on Sunday last, in order to protest against the ill-treatment of their fellow-countrymen in Macedonia. A large crowd assembled, but as there was no organization and they could not decide on the election of a Chairman or a Committee, a scene of disorder ensued and the meeting was eventually broken up by the police. A fresh meeting is to take place on Sunday next, meanwhile it is clear that there is no unanimity as to the form of resolution which will be adopted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 279.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 13.)

(Extract.) *Belgrade, October 9, 1902.*

DR. VOUITCH, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom I had a conversation to-day, confirmed the views expressed in my previous despatches as to the incidents which have recently occurred in the neighbourhood of Monastir. He described them as acts of brigandage which had no doubt been organized by the Committees in connection with the celebrations at Shipka, but which had quite failed in attaining their object. They had, moreover, been greatly exaggerated and had never attained the importance of an organized revolution as would appear to be the case from accounts published in the foreign press. In this connection he mentioned that M. Militchevitch, the Servian Minister in London, had reported that he had received satisfactory assurances that the English Government would make representations at the Porte urging that order should be maintained in Macedonia.

His Excellency appears to regard the incident connected with the establishment of a Russian Consulate at Mitrovitza as showing the difficulty experienced by the Porte in maintaining its authority in Albania, thus confirming views he has often expressed to me in connection with their frontier disputes.

No. 280.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 13.)

(Extract.) *St. Petersburgh, October 7, 1902.*

I CALLED at the Russian Foreign Office yesterday to take leave of Count Lamsdorff before starting for my holiday.

In reply to my inquiry whether he had any commissions or messages for me to take to London, his Excellency said that he had none, except a desire to present his respects to your Lordship, and to express his regret at not yet having had an opportunity of making your personal acquaintance.

He then said that, happily, he saw no cloud on the political horizon at present to cause any anxiety or trouble.

The public press, it was true, had been giving currency to alarming telegrams from the Balkans, but he had, he said, failed to obtain any official conformation of their reports, and did not think that any serious trouble was at present to be apprehended there.

His Excellency also said that it was very possible that the commemorative ceremony and celebrations in the Shipka Pass had seemed, in quarters interested in sounding notes of alarm, too good an opportunity for the diffusion of exaggerating reports to be neglected, but that every precaution had been taken beforehand to keep the ceremony and festivities within the strict limits of their real character—partly religious and partly commemorative—and the Emperor had strictly enjoined on the Grand Duke Nicholas that nothing was to be said or done which could give occasion for political demonstrations of any kind. The visit which His Imperial Highness had been commissioned to pay to Constantinople on the termination of the celebration was intended to satisfy the Sultan of its non-political character, and of the Emperor's friendly disposition to His Majesty.

No. 281.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 14, 1902.*

FOLLOWING from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, 12th October:—

"According to report from Mr. Theodorides at Serres, a state of complete insurrection prevails in the districts of Razlog, Djumabala, and Petritch, the movement comprising 22 villages. All communications have been interrupted; two Moslem villages have been burned, and half a battalion of Turkish troops destroyed."

These reports are denied by the Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister, though they admit that near Strumitza the rebels have forced, under threats, the inhabitants of a few villages to join them, and that there has been some fighting, of which the dispersal of the rebels with the loss of two or three Turkish soldiers has been the result.

I hear, further, that the Russian Agent at Sophia is reported by the Turkish Ambassador in St. Petersburgh to have been instructed to warn the Bulgarian Government that the responsibility would rest with them alone if the revolutionary movement continued.

A note of remonstrance has been addressed to the Bulgarian Government by the Porte. The former have replied that they would dissolve all the Committees in Bulgaria.

A later telegram from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica states that news from Monastir points to the voluntary dispersal of the bands.

No. 282.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at this Court relative to the condition of Macedonia.*

Hamid Bey states that the Turkish Government have received information from the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Monastir showing that orders have been issued to the Bulgarian bands by the Revolutionary Committees to murder both Mussulmans and Greek Notables, and that the murder of several of the latter has already been reported by the Greek Minister at Constantinople to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I request that you will furnish me with your observations on this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 283.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1902.

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires called upon me to-day and asked whether I could give him any information as to the action which His Majesty's Government were likely to take in consequence of the note which he had addressed to this Office on the 10th instant, upon the subject of the situation in Bulgaria.

He told me that the Turkish Government relied largely upon our assistance in the matter, and hoped that we should require the Bulgarian Government to discourage the proceedings of the agitators.

I told Hamid Bey that it was obviously desirable that we should confer with the other Powers to whom the Circular had been addressed before arriving at a decision. I doubted whether the Bulgarian Government were likely to be led by the advice of a single Power to put a stop to the agitation. The movement was evidently a popular one in Bulgaria and no Bulgarian Government would probably care to oppose it except under strong pressure from outside. Russia was obviously in a position to exercise such pressure should she desire to do so.

I promised Hamid Bey that I would let him know the result of our communications with the other Powers concerned.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 284.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 15, 1902.

MY telegram of yesterday.

It now appears that a telegram was received three days ago by the Porte from the Vali of Salonica in which the situation was described as very serious; large numbers of Bulgarian villagers had joined the insurgents, who are 7,000 in number

* No. 271.

according to the estimate of the Kaïmakams, though Vali thinks this figure too high. General fighting was going on in the Struma Valley and telegraphic communication was interrupted. At the urgent request of the civil authorities for protection for Moslem villages large numbers of troops were being sent north.

I have repeated the above to Sophia.

No. 285.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 17, 1902.

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires has made a communication complaining of the alleged increased activity of the Revolutionary Committees in Bulgaria and its disastrous effect on the neighbouring Ottoman provinces.

It is stated that as the agitators when pursued take refuge across the Bulgarian border, the repressive measures adopted by the Ottoman authorities are rendered ineffective, and that repeated requests made by the Porte to the Bulgarian Government for the punishment of the offenders and the dissolution of the Committees have led to no result.

This attitude on the part of the Bulgarian Government appears to the Turkish Government to be unjustifiable, and they request His Majesty's Government to make representations at Sophia for the dissolution of the Committees and the adoption of measures to prevent their further activity.

I have informed Hamid Bey that before arriving at a decision it will be necessary for His Majesty's Government to confer with the other Powers, to whom similar representations have been addressed. The movement being popular in Bulgaria, no Bulgarian Government would be likely, on the advice of a single Power, to place itself in opposition to it. Strong pressure would be necessary, and Russia, if she were disposed to do so, was obviously in the best position to exercise such pressure.

You should inquire what view the Government to which you are accredited take of the Turkish Circular, and whether they have made any reply to it. His Majesty's Government would gladly co-operate with other Governments in any attempt to prevent an extension of the present disorders.

No. 286.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, October* 18, 1902.

YOUR Lordship's telegram of yesterday respecting the agitation in Macedonia. M. Delcassé tells me that Turkish Ambassador has been sending him a series of such notes.

His Excellency said that he had already more than once urged the Bulgarian Government to oppose the revolutionary propaganda in Macedonia by every means in their power, and that he was ready to join the Powers in repeating this advice; but he added that, for such a communication to have its full effect, representations should, in his opinion, be made simultaneously to the Porte with a view to obtaining that measures should be taken which, by ameliorating the condition of the population of Macedonia, would render it less susceptible to the agitation of Bulgarian revolutionaries.

No. 287.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, October* 18, 1902.

COUNT GOLUCHOWSKI being absent, I was to-day informed by M. de Merey that he had replied to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires that the Austro-Hungarian

* Also to Sir F. Lascelles, Sir F. Plunkett, Mr. C. Hardinge and Sir R. Rodd. Repeated to Constantinople and Sophia.

Government would arrive at a decision after having inquired of their Agent at Sophia whether he considered there was ground for any fresh representations to the Bulgarian Government in the matter of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday.

It was still the belief of the Austro-Hungarian Government, added M. de Merey, that there was gross exaggeration in the reports received from Macedonia of outrages and revolutionary movements.

No. 288.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, October* 18, 1902.

THIS afternoon I made inquiries in accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday.

M. Argyropoulo said he probably could not give me the information which your Lordship desires without having consulted Count Lamsdorff at Yalta, and he accordingly asked me to send him a Memorandum.

He said that reports received from the Russian Agents did not describe the situation in Macedonia as serious, and he added that the Russian Government had received very definite assurances from the Bulgarian Government that they would give no encouragement to the revolutionary movement, while their attitude in taking measures to prevent incursions from their side of the frontier was most correct.

No. 289.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 20.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, October* 13, 1902.

AS the meeting which it was intended to hold on the 5th instant to protest against the ill-treatment of the Servian population in Old Servia and Macedonia failed from want of proper organization, a second meeting was held yesterday.

On this occasion there was no want of organization. A platform was erected in the open air in the principal square of Belgrade. There was a formidable array of speakers and ample accommodation for the press.

The proceedings, as is usual in this country, commenced at 9 A.M., but the weather was unpropitious and not conducive to enthusiasm. There was a considerable gathering, as it had been largely advertised, but it was perfectly orderly. During the time I was present the crowd, which was never dense, listened patiently to what appeared to be eloquent speeches, delivered by journalists and lawyers. The last speaker, a priest, made a considerable effect. Holding up a cross he adjured those present by this holy emblem to hold themselves in readiness to sacrifice everything in the cause of their co-religionists, who were suffering under the oppression of the Turks.

The sense of the meeting will be gathered from the resolution of which I have the honour to inclose a translation. Some of the speakers, however, used intemperate language with regard to Austria and the Porte, which has, it appears, met with the King's disapproval. His Majesty was at that time preparing for an excursion to Vranja, on the Turkish frontier, where he was met by the Vali of Uskub, who came to greet His Majesty in the name of the Sultan.

The Vali was accompanied by the Servian Consul-General and Vice-Consul, and it appeared to His Majesty that the occasion of this friendly action on the part of the Sultan was an inopportune moment for making a somewhat hostile demonstration at Belgrade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

Inclosure in No. 289.

Resolution passed at Meeting held in Belgrade, October 12, 1902.

(Translation.)

1. THE terrible events which are taking place in Old Servia and Macedonia are such as to call for the condemnation of the entire world.

The Servian people, whose brothers are the greater sufferers in those countries; is, in the first place, called upon to express its horror and repugnance of the acts of violence and brigandage perpetrated by the Albanians and Turks.

2. This assembly declares that the Turkish Government is, in the first place, the cause and responsible for these acts of violence, because it protects and maintains the elements which work systematically for the destruction and the suppression of the Servian element in Old Servia and Macedonia.

3. This assembly therefore calls on the Servian Government to take measures for insuring the securing of the lives and property of Servians living in Turkey, for the situation in Old Servia and Macedonia is such that it can be tolerated no longer, and the interests of humanity and those of European peace demand that an end should as soon as possible be placed to this state of affairs.

Otherwise Servia and the Servian people decline all responsibility for events which must inevitably occur in these countries, and must draw Servia into action, as the Servian people can no longer permit the destruction of the entire race in Old Servia and Macedonia.

4. This assembly assures its brethren in Old Servia and Macedonia that the Servian people is always ready to come to their assistance and to protect them at all risks: "Without their life there is none for us; their death is our death." Consequently, if assistance be not given within a short time from this country to the Servians of Old Servia and Macedonia, the Servian people will know how to protect their brethren themselves rather than to see the last remnant of life extinguished and suffocated in blood!

No. 290.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 20.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October* 14, 1902.

IN your despatch to Mr. Marling of the 30th ultimo, your Lordship called for observations on a note addressed to you by the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, stating that the papers seized upon Boris Sarafoff at Nish showed that he was in constant communication with the Bulgarian Minister of War, and that the proceedings taken by the Bulgarian Government against the Revolutionary Committee were "illusoires."

I have mentioned this statement, without quoting the authority for it, both to the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs and to the Ottoman Commissioner. M. Daneff said that he had not heard of any such papers having been found upon Sarafoff; if it was true, the Servian Government ought to have communicated them to him, and he would speak to the Servian Representative about it. He, however, thought it most unlikely that Sarafoff was in relations with the War Office; if he had been told this of another person he would not have been surprised.

Ali Ferruh Bey had no information of any papers compromising the Bulgarian War Office having been found on Sarafoff. As regards the recent proceedings of the Bulgarian Government against the Macedonian Committee, they had, as a matter of course, led to nothing; no papers of importance had been found at their office (as reported by Mr. Marling in his despatch of the 10th September), because three days' notice had been given of the raid upon it.

Ali Ferruh Bey, whom I met in the Minister's waiting room as I came out from an interview with his Excellency, told me he had in his pocket an official note demanding, in the name of the Turkish Government, the suppression of the Macedonian Committee. I have since heard that M. Daneff, on receiving it, declined to discuss the matter then and there, but said he would send a reply.

Reasons had been given, in my despatch of the 16th June and in Mr. Marling's of the 22nd September, against supporting the Turkish demand for the dissolution of the Committee; but it cannot be denied that the Turkish case has been greatly strengthened by the toleration accorded by the Bulgarian Government to the publication by the "Reformi" of open incitements to insurrection, and by the negligence which (if the report which I had the honour to telegraph on the 12th instant is confirmed, which is not yet the case) has allowed General Tsôncheff, the Vice-President of the Committee, to escape for a second time from his "internement" at Drenovo, and to cross

the frontier into Macedonia with the object of taking the lead in the revolutionary movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 291.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 20.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October 14, 1902.*

THE "Reformi," published by the Mikhailovsky-Tsoncheff Committee, issues almost daily leaflets, printed in red, announcing the spread of the insurrection in Macedonia and successes of the insurgents' arms.

On the 8th instant it notified the Proclamation of insurrection in the districts of Jumaia, Melnik, Petrich, Nevrokop, Demir-Hissar, Porvia, Doiran, Kukush, Maleshovo, Strumitsa, Uskub, and Razlog; the President of the Revolutionary Council being Lieutenant-Colonel Nikoloff, a reserve officer who had been "interné" at Dobrich, near Varna, but made his escape.

Two days later heavy fighting was reported at Jumaia, in which three guns were captured from the Turks. Yesterday it was stated that 600 Nizams had been killed and 100 captured near Serbinovo and Gradevo, on the left bank of the Struma; also that Lieutenant Dorvingoff (who, I am told, is a deserter from the active army, and has been arrested once and released), with eight insurgents and forty peasants, attacked 100 Nizams, who left thirty dead on the ground. I give the above as specimens of the "Reformi's" productions, for they are so obviously grossly exaggerated that it would be futile to report them in detail.

The other "Reformi," the organ of the opposition Committee, continues to deny that there is any rising at all, properly speaking.

At M. Daneff's reception on the 11th instant, I asked his Excellency whether he had any information about the occurrences described in the "Reformi." He said he had no direct information; but, after making every allowance for exaggeration, it was certain that something out of the common was going on beyond the frontier. The measures taken by the Bulgarian Government to prevent the passage of bands had proved insufficient, two bands having forced their way through the cordon quite recently, and the Government had, therefore, decided to reinforce the troops on the frontier. This has since been done, three classes of reservists of the 13th (Rilo) Regiment having been called out, and two squadrons of the Sophia Cavalry Regiment dispatched to Kustendil, as well as some additional gendarmes.

I remarked that it was not surprising that there was some effervescence among the Macedonians after General Ignatieff's speeches. He replied that I was evidently quite misinformed as to the effect of the General's utterances; he had done nothing but preach patience to them, and that so far from being encouraged by him, they were greatly disappointed. I am bound to say that the Ottoman Commissioner to some extent confirms this view of the effect of General Ignatieff's harangues on the Macedonians of Sophia.

M. Daneff holds the opinion, which is the general one, that the disorders in Macedonia will cease with the beginning of winter. The President of the Committee, however, told a person who told me, that that was a mistaken idea, as the insurgents were better able to carry on a winter campaign than the Turkish troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 292.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 20.)

My Lord, *Vienna, October 18, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the translation of a telegram appealing for help for the Macedonians, which is published this morning in the new Vienna newspaper "Die Zeit," and which is stated to have

been received by that journal from Stojan Michailowsky, the President of the Macedonian Committee at Sophia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

Inclosure in No. 292.

Extract from "Die Zeit" of October 18, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE era of bloody deeds of violence in Turkey is commencing afresh. In the districts round Djuma, Maleshovo, Melnik, and elsewhere women and children have been shot dead by Bashi-Bozouks and regular troops. In view of these sacrifices of human lives and in the name of Christian civilization, we turn to you with the request for your generous assistance, and beg you to defend the Macedonians, the nation of martyrs of the new century.

(Signed) STOJAN MICHAILOWSKY,
President of the Macedonian Adrianopolitan Committee.

Sophia, October 17, 1902.

No. 293.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 20.)

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 18 *Octobre*, 1902.

M. le Marquis,

J'AI l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de votre Seigneurie les faits suivants :—

D'après les récentes dépêches fournies par les autorités provinciales Ottomanes, ceux des habitants de quelques villages qui, à l'instigation des Comités Révolutionnaires Bulgares, s'étaient retirés dans les montagnes ont déjà pour la plupart regagné leurs foyers et les autres, dont le nombre est, du reste, très petit, ne tarderont pas à retourner également chez eux, grâce aux conseils qui leur sont donnés par leurs Chefs spirituels.

Ce fait prouve que les provinces Européennes de la Turquie ne se trouvent pas dans un état tel que certaines feuilles Bulgares cherchent à le représenter, et que si quelques villageois s'étaient livrés à des actes irréfléchis, cela était exclusivement dû aux intrigues coupables des meneurs Bulgares. Le journal "Pravo" et quelques autres organes sérieux de la presse Bulgare l'ont reconnu eux-mêmes.

Il convient d'ajouter que les villageois qui ont déjà réintégré leurs foyers avaient auparavant livré aux autorités Impériales la plus grande partie des armes qui leur avaient été distribuées par les révolutionnaires, et que bien qu'ils aient voulu conserver le reste pour se défendre contre les attaques de ces derniers, ils ont remis ces armes aux autorités sur les assurances qui leur ont été données que les troupes Impériales veilleraient à leur protection.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) A. HAMID.

(Translation.)

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
October 18, 1902.

M. le Marquis,

I HAVE the honour to call your Lordship's attention to the following facts:—

According to recent despatches from the Ottoman provincial authorities, those of the inhabitants of certain villages who, at the instigation of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees, had retired to the mountains, have already for the most part returned to their homes, while the others, of whom the number is very small, will not be long in returning, thanks to the advice given them by their spiritual advisers.

This fact proves that the European provinces of Turkey are not in the state they are represented to be in by certain Bulgarian journals, and that if some villagers had been guilty of rash acts, that was exclusively due to the culpable intrigues of the Bulgarian leaders. The journal "Pravo," and some other serious organs of the Bulgarian press, have recognized this fact.

I must add that the villagers who have already returned to their homes had previously delivered up to the Imperial authorities the greater part of the arms which had been distributed among them by the revolutionaries, and that, though they wished to keep the remainder to defend themselves against the attacks of these latter, they have handed over these arms to the authorities on receiving assurances that the Imperial troops will be responsible for their protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. HAMID.

No. 294.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir E. Monson.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 22, 1902.

THE French Ambassador spoke to me to-day with regard to the proposal of the Turkish Government that the Powers should take action for the purpose of preventing the spread of disorder in the Balkan Peninsula.

His Excellency told me that the French Government had already made strong recommendations at Constantinople in favour of moderation, and that they had also energetically urged upon the Bulgarian Government the necessity of restraining the action of the Bulgarian agitators. His own impression was that there was nothing more to be done, and he had noticed with satisfaction that the situation appeared to be improving.

I told his Excellency that His Majesty's Government had also done what it could in the matter of good advice, and that I did not see that we could, for the present, usefully go further.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 295.

Sir R. Rodd to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, October* 22, 1902.

MACEDONIAN movement: Your Lordship's telegram of the 17th instant.

No reply has yet been sent to the Turkish note by the Italian Government.

Signor Prinetti has instructed the Italian Representative to ascertain the views taken by the other Powers.

He would be willing to join in making representations at Sophia if all the other great Powers agreed to do the same.

Any action without unanimity would, in his opinion, be undesirable, and encourage Bulgaria to expect that the dissentient Powers would support her.

No. 296.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, October* 20, 1902.

THE fact appears to be generally recognized that there has been considerable exaggeration in the accounts of disturbances in Macedonia which reach Western Europe through the Vienna press; but, however exaggerated these statements may be, there can be no doubt that the state of affairs in that province has been more serious recently than in previous years, as the revolutionary bands have been larger, more numerous, and spread over a wider extent of country than hitherto.

In commenting on the situation, the "Politische Correspondenz" remarks that it is impossible to give a really comprehensive view of the movements of the revolutionary bands, as they are entirely independent of each other. Even a critical comparison of official Turkish information, with reports furnished by Consuls, does not afford an entirely trustworthy account. Single bands which display a certain amount of activity often appear in such accounts as several bands. Conflicts between Turkish troops or

Gendarmerie and the bands generally take place in remote districts, and, as in real warfare, the number of those engaged is always given as greater than it really is. Bands consisting of 100 men are very seldom met with, and they are only collected together for a very short time, as, having regard to the difficulty of obtaining food and for active work, bands of from six to fifteen men are much more manageable, and the larger ones seldom exceed twenty-five to forty in number.

The troubles caused by these bands have hitherto been insignificant when compared with the extent of Macedonia and the military power of Turkey, although their entire dispersion would be difficult to accomplish even with a force twenty times larger, as shown by the experience of recent guerilla warfare.

A much more dangerous symptom, according to the "Politische Correspondenz," is the fact that a revolutionary spirit has spread over nearly the whole of the Bulgarian population of Macedonia, and that there is, perhaps, no single Bulgarian village in that country where there are not some members of a Bulgarian Committee who in many ways terrorize their peaceable fellow-citizens, who, on their part, do not dare to inform the local Turkish authorities. Of this there are many proofs—such, for instance, as that the inhabitants of villages, including women, are driven into the encampments of these bands, where they are compelled to bake bread and even to follow the bands into the mountains. It has furthermore been shown that the majority of the dead and of the prisoners does not consist of Macedonians from Bulgaria, but of members of one or other of the local Macedonian Committees.

The too prolonged maintenance of the Turkish troops under arms has also its dangers. Discontent arising from prolonged hardship and arrears of pay might easily lead to excesses which might affect not only the Bulgarian population, but might also involve the whole Christian population in similar suffering. The exasperation also of the Mahommedan population, who in some districts have been attacked in their dwellings by the bands, should it take the form of reprisals by the formation of Mahommedan bands, might easily have serious and deplorable results.

In a word, the situation in Macedonia has without doubt become unfavourable, and not without danger for the future, although for the time being no serious complication is to be feared. The division in the Committee, the advancing season, and finally the very sufficient Turkish forces, will ward off from the Porte any immediate danger. Its best course now would be to obviate threatening danger by an improvement in the administration—not by so-called reforms, but by a thorough search into the practices of provincial employés, and by replacing those who are notorious by a strong and upright element. Furthermore, the Valis and military commanders must be emancipated from the interference of the central authority, and receive fuller powers than heretofore.

In these simple measures consists the only means by which Turkey can avert the dangers awaiting her in the future and maintain her *status quo* in the Peninsula.

Although the foregoing may not convey much that is new to those who have the advantage of correct official information, it derives importance as expressing the views held by the unofficial organ of the Vienna Foreign Office, and is apparently intended to correct the generally accepted views as to the part played by Turks and Bulgarians in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. F. BONHAM.

No. 297.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 27.)

My Lord, *Vienna, October* 18, 1902.

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I called on M. de Merey at the Foreign Department, and enquired what view the Austro-Hungarian Government have taken of the last Circular despatch of the Porte, asking the Powers to make representation at Sophia for the dissolution of the Macedonian Committees, and for the adoption of other measures to put a stop to their activity.

M. de Merey said the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires had made a communication of this nature here a few days ago and had been informed that the Austro-Hungarian Agent at Sophia would be consulted as to whether there was good reason for making fresh representations to the Bulgarian Government; the Austro-Hungarian Government would reserve their decision until their Agent's reply reached them.

In the course of further conversation M. de Merey said that all the reports which reached the Department from the Austro-Hungarian Agents in the Balkan Peninsula made the Ministry believe that the reports of outrages and revolutionary movements in Macedonia are grossly exaggerated. Moreover, he did not think the Powers would do any good by repeating too often their warnings at Sophia. A too frequent repetition of advice was apt to weaken its effect, and therefore this temporizing reply was all that had been given to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 298.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October 18, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch received from the Acting British Vice-Consul at Uskub, containing a report on Bulgarian, Greek, and Servian schools, and inclosing comparative statistics of the population of the Diocese of Uskub and the Vilayet of Kossovo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 298.

Acting Vice-Consul Shipley to Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti.

(Extract.) *Uskub, September 20, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your information, a Return of the Servian, the Bulgarian, and the Greek schools in the Archbishopric of Uskub, together with one of the population of the vilayet, showing the number of the different races or sects.

The figures given in the Return cannot be entirely trusted. They are taken from statistics given me by the Servian Consul-General and the Bulgarian Archbishop respectively. Of the two, I am inclined to attach more faith to the latter's Returns, especially those relating to the Bulgarian schools, since he has less interest in exaggerating than the former, whose schools are on the decline. I am, moreover, inclined to trust the Archbishop's Return of even the Servian schools more than those of the Servian Consul's, since the latter are losing in numbers and influence at a rate sufficiently great to satisfy even the Bulgarians.

The chief importance of these statistics lies in comparison.

Mr. Vice-Consul Fontana, on the 27th October, 1900, gave the following figures:—

Bulgarian schools, 128 with 6,036 pupils; Servian schools, 98 with 3,564 pupils. Taking the Servians at their own estimate, there has since that date been a decrease of 10 schools and 666 pupils (the Servian Consul-General gives 88 schools and 2,998 pupils; while the Bulgarian Archbishop allows them only 77 and 1,809 respectively). The Bulgarian schools have, on the other hand, increased both in number and in the number of pupils attending them, and are also, I am informed, in a more satisfactory financial position.

Inclosure 2 in No. 298.

CHRISTIAN Schools in the Archbishopric of Uskub, 1902.

Cazas.	Bulgarian.						Servian.						Greek.				
	Teachers.	Pupils.		Schools.		Percentage of Pupils on Christians.*	Teachers.	Pupils.		Schools.		Percentage.*	Teachers.	Pupils.		Schools.	Percentage.*
		Boys.	Girls.	1902.	1901.			Boys.	Girls.	1902.	1901.			Boys.	Girls.	1902.	
Uskub	59	1,076	545	31	31	5·3	44	611	239	19	20	2·8	5	90	140	2	0·8
Kalkandelen ..	32	942	390	20	20	5·0	28	773	159	26	27	3·5	..	..	..	..	..
Kumanovo	41	837	179	30	30	3·7	23	459	86	19	20	1·8	..	..	..	..	..
Palanka	17	247	89	11	11	1·5	2	39	..	3	3	0·2	..	..	..	..	..
Kratovo	22	355	171	14	14	3·3	12	100	23	7	9	0·8	..	..	..	..	..
Kochana	36	443	192	21	21	3·5	3	42	5	3	2	0·3	2	43	27	2	0·4
Ishtib	33	759	311	14	14	5·6	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tsarevo	9	83	25	8	7	1·6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Preshovo	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	374	88	11	12	1·7	..	..	..	..	..
Total	249	4,742	1,902	149	148	3·45	128	2,398	600	88	98	1·54	7	133	167	4	0·15

* This column states the percentage of the children attending the schools of the three races as compared with the Christian population given in Inclosure 3. The Servians state the population somewhat higher than it is stated there; their percentage would be correspondingly lower.

Inclosure 3 in No. 298.

POPULATION of the Vilayet of Kossovo: 1902.

Sandjaks.	Cazas.	Population.	Total.
Uskub (town, 34,000) ..	Uskub	68,465	
	Ishtib..	42,040	
	Kumanovo	41,209	
	Kiuprulu	53,608	
	Radovishte	18,482	
	Palanka	23,080	
	Kochana	29,025	
	Osmanie	24,858	
	Kratovo	21,065	
	Orhanie	8,139	
			329,971
Prishtina (town, 21,906) ..	Prishtina	77,492	
	Mitrovitza	6,142	
	Velchitryn	23,691	
	Preshovo	43,436	
	Guilan	54,694	
			205,455
Yeni Bazar (town, 3,780) ..	Yeni Bazar	34,605	
	Akova	21,745	
	Yeni Varoush	8,966	
	Kolashin	6,307	
			71,623
Prizrend (town, 10,612) ..	Prizrend	38,485	
	Kalkandelen	100,000	
	Louma	8,281	
			146,766
Ipek	Town and caza	50,000	
	Djakova	19,955	
	Berane	2,297	
	Tergovishte	5,269	
	Goussigne	4,876	
			82,397
Tashlidje	Tashlidje	44,450	
	Prepolie	16,583	
			61,033
Grand total of the Vilayet			897,245

Inclosure 4 in No. 298.

POPULATION of the Archbishopric of Uskub, 1902.

Cazas.	Towns, &c.	Christian Houses.							Moslem Houses.				Jews.	Total.
		Exarchist Slav.	Patriarchist Slav.	Greeks.	Vlachs.	Gypsies.	Albanians	Divers.	Turks.	Albanians.	Pomaks.	Gypsies.		
Uskub	158	4,055	808	17	65	2	65	22	2,596	1,869	545	288	200	10,532
Kalkandelen	154	2,872	1,487	..	5	45	..	..	3,434	6,267	322	85	..	14,517
Kumanovo	115	3,615	1,311	..	20	37	..	..	1,395	1,079	120	135	..	7,712
Palanka	48	3,277	17	1	75	21	..	..	490	..	..	108	..	3,989
Kratovo	69	2,408	157	1	17	38	..	..	764	..	..	20	..	3,405
Kochana	68	2,804	115	..	30	40	..	..	2,320	..	..	100	..	5,409
Ishtib	143	3,159	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,251	..	..	63	80	7,553
Tsarevo	31	1,102	..	..	..	..	..	..	85	..	1,076	52	..	2,315
Preshovo	114	..	4,324	..	..	70	..	..	320	2,332	..	30	..	7,076
Totals	900	23,292	8,219	19	212	253	65	22	15,655	11,547	2,063	881	280	62,508
Percentage	..	37·25	13·14	0·03	0·36	0·40	0·10	0·04	25·05	18·46	3·30	1·41	0·46	

No. 299.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October 20, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, advocating the substitution of regular troops for the gendarmerie employed in the disturbed parts of Macedonia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 299.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, October 11, 1902.*

I HAVE more than once submitted that quartering detachments of soldiers in each district would much tend to paralyze the actions of the bands, and to enable the inhabitants to evade the extortions and pressure now brought to bear on them. I consider the present an opportune moment to refer once more to a measure which, if properly executed, may have the most beneficial results for the population at large, and for the Government as well. According to the existing system, the gendarmes are left to deal with the brigands, and the army is only used as an auxiliary force for helping them. Under this system the brigands, as a rule, after an exchange of shots, manage to escape, mostly without casualties on either side. The frequent repetition of similar incidents has been the theme of conversation with the Vali, who, I have heard from the villages, made strong observations on the subject to some officers of gendarmerie placed there. But if no change takes place in the existing system, bands will continue to exist, and even to increase. In fact, the Christian population may be considered to be divided into three classes, so far as their relations with the Macedonian Committee are concerned:—

1. Individuals affiliated to them, who are ready at any moment to join them, and who, after running a venture, put aside their rifle, which they will take up again on the first call, and who, in the meantime, work as quiet labourers in the fields;

2. Those who are indifferent: they are in a minority, but side with the bands owing to fear or compulsion; and

3. Those who have a certain influence on their co-religionists: they are in a minority, and, at the first sign of resistance to the views of the Committee, are murdered, with the double object of getting rid of them and of striking the whole population with terror. Regular lists of proscription have been found by the authorities on some of the Bulgarians killed in encounters. The Macedonian Committee has drawn up registers taxing each Christian according to his means, and any one refusing to pay is executed. The money thus extorted often remains in the hands of those who collect it, and have an interest equal to that of the Macedonian Committee in maintaining the present state of things. Under these circumstances, the Christians, after paying taxes to the Government, have to pay a second taxation to the Committee, besides providing with food all members of bands coming to their villages, and who are shortly after followed by gendarmes, supposed to pursue them. But I have often heard they never display great activity in carrying out this duty, as, with the disappearance of the bands, part of their corps would naturally be disbanded. Not only this, but I have learnt quite lately, from most trustworthy sources, that in some cases the sergeants or corporals leading squads in villages do not execute with energy the orders they receive, convinced are they that by doing so they would inevitably bring themselves, sooner or later, under the Comitaji daggers. Thus the terrorism is not limited to the population. I am informed that in some cases bribery makes the gendarmes close their eyes. The strongest case reported to me lately is that of an Archbishop of Strumnitza, who appeared to dispose of large sums of money for propaganda purposes, paying regular wages of 5 mejidies per month to each gendarme in his See. Under these circumstances, the Christian populations, which are the first to be acquainted with such facts, cannot place any confidence in, or expect any protection from, the gendarmes. They look upon them rather as oppressors, and accuse them of practising acts of violence and extortion on them. I have reason to believe that even a few Kaïmakams and Mudirs are open to Committee bribery. I have mentioned all these facts to the Vali.

The gendarmes are almost exclusively recruited among the Ghegs, who are not so amenable to discipline as natives of other parts of the Ottoman dominions. I shall not discuss here whether all the rumours and complaints made against them are founded. I only go by the fact that the conviction of their being fully true exists among the Christian population, whether Bulgarian, Greek, or other races. These same Christians say they have not the slightest complaint against soldiers stationed in some of their districts, and they very often begged me to try and obtain that troops should replace Gheg gendarmes. There are some rumours and complaints circulated against the gardarmes that could not be attributed to the soldiers, such as, for instance, allowing the brigands to exist as a means of procuring them employment. At all events, it is indisputable that they are more amenable to discipline than the gendarmes, and that they receive rations, which relieves the peasants of the burden of their maintenance. In the interests of the population, and consequently of the Government, the present system should be reversed—the regular troops taking the lead and the gendarmes acting as additional local force under them, without establishing by such a change anything like a military occupation in the proper sense of the word.

The fact of the mere presence of troops in the districts of Vodena, Yenidje, Vardar, and Ghevgheli was sufficient to induce the inhabitants of Tashim and Sborsko to return home at the end of a few days, and to restore complete tranquillity is the best proof of the efficiency of the measures suggested. The continued presence of soldiers—whose numbers could be increased according to the requirements of the place—in the principal centres, and half the troops, being always on the move, will hamper the movements of the bands and render their revictualling most difficult. The section of population that submits with reluctance to the dictates of the bands will be encouraged to resist their demands for money, victuals, and shelter, without which the bands cannot exist, especially during the winter months. The power they now possess and the terror they inspire will gradually fade away, and even their most ardent and devoted partisans will be placed in the impossibility of giving them sufficient help, as their movements will be watched and possibly denounced with risk of their lives, as is the case now.

No doubt can be entertained that, simple as this system is, it cannot, if persisted in, fail to lead to the complete disappearance of the bands without the necessity of displaying measures of repression.

It is as certain that the Macedonian Committee will endeavour by all means to put an end to the maintenance of troops in the districts, and that, in order to arrive at this end, they will raise the usual cry of acts of violence, tortures, outrages, and massacres committed by the soldiers against inoffensive peasants.

And this cry is likely to be heard before long, even in consequence of the present temporary occupation of some districts in this vilayet, as it is the only means for them to attain their object. Great attention should therefore be given to this subject.

No. 300.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 27.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October* 21, 1902.

THE reports received from His Majesty's Consular Agents in Macedonia during the last fortnight and duly forwarded to your Lordship, together with the despatches summarized in the accompanying Memorandum by Mr. Blech, show that the revolutionary outbreak in the Monastir district has been held in check, but that it had assumed formidable proportions in the Serres, Razlog, and Juma districts bordering on the Bulgarian frontier.

Large reinforcements of the regular army were hurried to the scene of the disturbances, and Generals sent from here to direct and control the military operations, with the result that the insurgents are reported to have been entirely worsted, and to be now surrounded by a cordon of troops, who are in hopes of capturing Tsontcheff and other leaders. The villages which had been deserted by the inhabitants at the instigation of the revolutionary bands, have been mostly reoccupied under the protection of the troops, and an amnesty has been proclaimed which will probably induce the remainder to return very shortly.

There is no doubt, however, that the insurrectionary movement was more extensive and serious than on any late occasion, and that a great number of arms had been imported into the country which are probably hidden away until in the spring or summer a fresh outbreak is organized.

It is, however, satisfactory to note that the successes of the army have been obtained without any substantiated accusations of wanton cruelty or massacre, and that the military authorities appear to have borne in mind the instructions of the Grand Vizier and Minister of War, not to allow reprisals against the peasantry who were induced to join with the insurrectionary bands. As an instance of the efficacy of the Grand Vizier's orders, it is reported that after the rebels had been cleared out of the Cresna defile and driven to flight, the Minister of War hastened to send instructions to the local military authorities not to pursue them by night in order to avoid indiscriminate slaughter and any irregularities on the part of the troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 300.

Memorandum by Mr. Blech.

Sir A. Biliotti, October 5, 1902.

Ghevgheli and Vodena District.—Previous reports were exaggerated; only two villages were evacuated by their inhabitants, and these returned shortly afterwards, as is established by independent foreign witnesses.

The troops in search of Bulgarian bands were kept back from the mountains until these villagers had returned. About the 27th September a band of thirty-nine Bulgarians was captured on the heights between Ghevgheli and Vodena by the Turkish regular forces. They were not armed, but had probably concealed their weapons. About the same date a band of sixty Bulgarians under a certain Pavli, a Greek Orthodox, came to the village of Kriva (between Yenijé and Salonica) and exhorted the inhabitants to sink all differences and unite against the Turks, and incidentally to contribute to the Committee funds.

These bands have struck terror into the inhabitants, owing to several murders recently committed in revenge on persons who have given information to the authorities about the movements of the Committee.

Sir A. Biliotti, October 11, 1902.

Some disposition on the part of the Moslems of a neighbouring village to plunder the evacuated village of Toshoum was checked by apprehension that the apparent departure of the inhabitants was merely a feint. Eventually all ingress to the village was prevented by the troops until the return of the villagers, some of whom are said to have joined the bands. Rations are furnished daily to the troops from Ghevgheli, and no complaints have been made of their behaviour. Two instances are reported of violence (in one case fatal) committed on Christians by Moslems in this neighbourhood.

The Bulgarian band in this region is about 100 strong, under one Georgi Pavlov, a Wallachian, or Christian Albanian, who has taken up arms to revenge the murder of his only son by Moslems. There are other small bands of from eight to ten strong. Much expectation was aroused among the Bulgarians of this neighbourhood that the Shipka festivities would lead to their autonomy.

Mr. A. Shipley, October 6, 1902.

Kossovo.—The state of the vilayet is less disturbed than was the case last year, and few complaints are being made. The opposition of the Albanians to the establishment of a Russian Consulate at Mitrovitza has been checked by the strenuous action of the Turkish Government and might subside altogether if some other Consulate were also to be established there.

A few complaints have been made by Bulgarians against Servians and *vice versâ*. Some surprise has been caused by the Vali causing the seals of all the moukhtars of all the villages throughout the Caza of Uskub to be collected, and it is thought that they will be used for drawing up a statement to the effect that security is complete and that the Reform Commission need not pay its expected visit.

Four battalions of Redifs have been called out as a demonstration against the Shipka celebrations. These will eventually tend to make worse the position both of the Servians and Bulgarians—the former beginning to doubt the wisdom of trusting to Russia against the Turks, seeing her attitude towards their Bulgarian enemies; the latter becoming still greater objects of suspicion to the local authorities than before and likely to suffer in consequence.

Monastir District.—Colonel Yankoff's band has been reinforced by Kotteff's force, twenty strong. Yankoff's men are fifty in number, mostly outlaws from Ohrida, Perlepe, and Kirtsovo, some of whom have served in the Bulgarian army. The two bands are in the district of Kastoria, and a detachment of 250 troops has been sent against them. Forty men of the band went to Zagoritsani, a village three hours from

Kastoria, mostly inhabited by exarchists to obtain supplies and secret correspondence. While there they were attacked by troops, but managed to escape with a loss of seven killed and one severely wounded. The troops lost four killed and three wounded. In view of the active measures taken by the authorities, the insurgents will probably be unable to find hiding-places during the winter months, and will be forced to retire to Bulgaria.

Reports from Monastir announce that thirty-two insurgents belonging to Yankoff's and other bands have recently passed through on their way back to Bulgaria. They announce their intention of returning next spring. Others are said to be intending to follow this example. Sir A. Biliotti, October 13, 1902.

On the 7th instant a raid on the village of Konomblat (near Kastoria), upon information given by a shepherd, resulted in the capture of twenty-three Martini and Männlicher rifles. Nine peasants were arrested and sent to the prison of Kastoria. The denunciation is significant as following so soon on the departure of a number of Comitajis. The organization of the bands of the Macedonian Committee may be considered at an end for this year in the Vilayet of Monastir.

Three members of the family of a Bulgarian, named Vano Tiambo, were murdered on the 8th instant by Moslem fellow-villagers at Tilleni, an hour and a-quarter from Kastoria. The motive seems to have been irritation caused by the fact that Vano (who was absent at the time of the outrage) was known to be an ardent protector of the insurrectionary movement, and had more than once been imprisoned, but had succeeded in escaping punishment by bribery.

Juma Bala, Razlog, Serres Districts.—On the 5th instant a collision took place at Tsiaresnitsa, in the Juma Bala district, between a detachment of troops and a large Bulgarian band. The Bulgarians are said to have lost thirty killed, or, according to the Vali, twenty-five, and the Turks one killed and one wounded. A few days earlier a clerk of the Ottoman Public Debt and two gendarmes were killed on the Kresna road (Melnik district). Two companies were at once sent there, followed on the next day by a battalion; and the 2nd battalions of Redifs of Serres and Drama were called out. The northern part of the Mutessariflik of Serres is, according to private information, in a state of complete anarchy, and all business is at a standstill. The first battalions of the Redifs of Salonica and Serfije have been ordered to Serres, for which destination five superior officers left on the 11th instant. Sir A. Biliotti, October 9, 1902.

Reports state that twenty-two villages have joined in the insurrection, that two Moslem villages have been destroyed, and that at Kresna 400 soldiers on their way to Juma Bala were annihilated by the insurgents, whose number was estimated at 3,000. Telegraphic communications are interrupted. Sir A. Biliotti, Telegraphic, October 12, 1902.

These accounts were evidently exaggerated, and were contradicted by the Sublime Porte, which, however, has since shown an inclination to admit that the situation was serious. On the 17th instant the following official communiqué appeared in the papers:—

"An official communication published in this morning's Turkish papers announces that, some ten days ago, bands of armed Bulgarians made their appearance in the districts of Razlog and Juma Bala, in the Mutessariflik of Serres, and fomented disturbances. They incited or compelled the Bulgarian residents in some villages to quit their homes and accompany them to the mountains. As soon as the news reached Serres, General Ibrahim Pasha sent an adequate force against the brigands, and according to telegrams received from him and from the Commander-in-chief of the 3rd Army Corps and the Governor-General of Salonica, the troops vigorously attacked and routed the Bulgarians. Some of them escaped, and others were captured and handed over to justice. As regards the Bulgarian villagers who fled with the brigands to the mountains, most of them, on seeing the fate which has befallen the disturbers of peace, submitted to the authorities, and returned to their homes. They declared that they had been forced by the brigands to accompany them, and are now delivering to the authorities the arms which had been distributed to them. Some of the villagers, however, considering themselves responsible for their acts, and fearing punishment, have not returned to their villages, and have made an appeal to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan's clemency. His Imperial Majesty has now informed them, through the local authorities or the village priests, that he pardons them. In view of the measures taken by the Imperial Government, such a disturbance of peace could not, of course, last long, and according to the despatches quoted above, tranquillity is being restored, and all trace of brigandage may be expected to disappear very shortly."

No. 301.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October 20, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 14th instant, transmitting to me for my observations a copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, in which it is stated that the Turkish Government have received information from the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Monastir showing that orders have been issued to the Bulgarian bands by the revolutionary Committees to murder both Mussulman and Greek notables, and that the murder of several of the latter has already been reported by the Greek Minister at Constantinople to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have nothing to remark upon the above statement except that it is not inherently incredible or improbable, for the Christians of these provinces love each other as little as the Turks, and while they are less under control than the latter, their methods are no less barbarous.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 302.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October 20, 1902.*

AT M. Daneff's reception the day before yesterday I had some disjointed conversation with him on the subject of Macedonia. I asked him if he had any recent information. He said he had nothing positive, but that the impression which he gathered was that things were quieter. (I had just heard the same from the Ottoman Commissioner, who had received no reports of fighting for three days.) M. Daneff confirmed the newspaper statement that several hundred non-combatants, with flocks and herds, had crossed the frontier into Bulgaria, and said he was already making arrangements with the Commissioner for sending these people back to their homes.

I alluded once more to the responsibility of the Bulgarian Government for the escape of General Tsoncheff, Colonel Yankoff and Colonel Nikoloff; to their toleration of direct incitement to insurrection by the "Reformi;" and to the public meeting organized by the Macedonian Committee for the next day, asking what would be done supposing M. Mikhailowsky, the President, uttered aloud language similar to that printed in his paper.

M. Daneff replied that there had been no ground for imprisoning the officers I referred to, and that it was impossible to prevent their escaping from "internement;" that the press is free in Bulgaria, but that if the Ottoman Commissioner asked him to prosecute the editors of the "Reformi," he would at once do so; that, as for Mikhailovsky, no one pays any attention to him.

His Excellency asked me whether I had been instructed, as he had seen in the papers, to make representations to the Bulgarian Government on the Macedonian question.

I replied that I had not, but as I had just received from your Lordship the repetition of your telegram to Sir E. Monson of the 17th instant, I added that I thought it not improbable that I should be so instructed, as I knew the matter was under consideration.

M. Daneff said I should be able to report to His Majesty's Government the firm intention of this Government to discourage agitation here and the adoption by them of the necessary measures. I replied that that would depend on the effect I saw produced by the measures already announced. I concluded by saying that, while I fully recognized that the Bulgarian Government could not help sympathizing with the populations across the border, yet if, as I fully believed was the case, they were thoroughly convinced that the best interests of the Principality required them to put down any movement in support of insurrection, it was their bounden duty to take energetic steps with that object.

M. Daneff declared that that was what they were doing.

I thought M. Daneff's language unsatisfactory, but he appears to have spoken

more positively to some of my colleagues, and the Ottoman Commissioner is not dissatisfied.

I have this evening received from Sir N. O'Conor the repetition of Mr. Hardinge's telegram of the 18th October, in which it is stated that, according to the Russian Government, the Bulgarian Government are acting very correctly and taking measures to prevent incursions from their side, and have given assurances that no encouragement will be given to the revolutionary movement. I cannot, however, but remember that similar assurances have been given, and similar measures announced, periodically for many months.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 303.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October* 20, 1902.

THE meeting referred to in my preceding despatch as having been organized by the Macedonian Committee was held yesterday afternoon. 10,000 persons are reported to have attended it; but, according to the evidence of my own eyes, there were not more than a tenth of that number at the outside, mostly respectably-dressed citizens.

M. Mikhailovsky, the President, said that history showed that the cause of the subjugation of the Bulgarians by the Turks was their dissensions among themselves. Now the same dissensions were at work, and while the cries of thousands of women and children were heard from beyond to Rilo Mountains, where thousands of Bulgarians were being massacred, and everyone capable of bearing arms had risen in revolt, some among them maintained there was no insurrection and no insurgents. They said also that the moment was not opportune to support a rising. He was of the same opinion, but he was convinced that before Europe had found the opportune moment for the solution of the question the population of Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople would have been annihilated. It was not they who had provoked the insurrection, but the politicians on the Bosphorus and the Sultan, whose chief instrument of administration is the yatagan. Twenty-five years ago the situation was much more favourable than it is now, for at that time the Great Powers of Europe had come to the conclusion that the situation in the Balkan Peninsula was intolerable. But the present insurrection was based upon a Treaty signed by all the Powers and by the Representatives of the Sultan. All the duties which are obligatory on the weaker party are obligatory also on the stronger; therefore the oppressed population is completely justified in seeking to obtain for itself that which, it is quite evident, will never be obtained for it by any one else. As regards the bands of incursionists, it was perfectly certain that no one would ever be in a position to prevent their crossing the frontier. As the Roumanians replied to the representations of the Powers twenty-six years ago, no one can prevent persons who wish to return to their native land from doing so.

After Mikhailovsky's speech, the following Resolutions were carried, after which the meeting quietly dispersed.

"The citizens of Sophia, the emigrants from Macedonia and the Vilayet of Adrianople, and the Representatives of the Macedonian Societies, after hearing the speech of President Mikhailovsky on current events beyond the Rilo, have resolved:—

"1. We unanimously approve the policy of the Supreme Macedonian Committee.

"2. We protest against any opposition in regard to events beyond the Rilo.

"3. We protest against the indifference of the Macedonian and Adrianopolitan patriots towards the business of liberation whether they belong to our party or to the opposition.

"4. We send fraternal greetings to the leaders and combatants beyond the Rilo, who are sacrificing themselves without hope, and have found the means to give a rough lesson to the entire Bulgarian nation and to the diplomacy of Europe.

"5. These, our Resolutions, shall be transmitted for publication to the entire Bulgarian and foreign press."

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 304.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, October 22, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a despatch from Mr. Heard, His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, on the subject of a meeting held in that town under the auspices of the local Macedonian Committee, and of the movements of bands, and the strengthening of the frontier.

With regard to the escape of General Tsoncheff, related in the inclosure to Mr. Heard's despatch, another account states that he crossed the frontier disguised as a woman. In any case, it appears to be certain that he reached the insurgent camp near Jumaia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 304.

Acting Vice-Consul Heard to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Philippopoli, October 21, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Macedonian Committee has recently been showing renewed activity here, chiefly with the object of collecting funds for the furtherance of its aims. On the 18th instant Proclamations emanating from the Philippopoli Macedono-Adrianople Committee, enumerating the wrongs of Macedonia, and soliciting help, material or otherwise (special mention being made of medical necessities), were widely distributed throughout the town. It is worthy of notice that the usual fiscal stamps were not affixed to these notices, the impress of the Committee cancelling stamp being apparently thought sufficient. The fact that they were not torn down under the circumstances by the police would seem to indicate that the authorities recognize the Macedono-Adrianople Committee as a Benevolent Society, and as such, exempt from the usual fiscal duties.

On Sunday, the 19th instant, at 10·30, a meeting was held in the Czar Simeon Square, under the auspices of the Philippopoli Macedono-Adrianople Committee, in which the condition of Macedonia under Turkish misrule was reviewed, a vote of sympathy and encouragement was passed in favour of the Macedonian insurgents, and the conduct of those persons and newspapers who tried to minimize the importance and extent of the revolutionary movement in Macedonia was severely criticized. Finally it was resolved that the Government should be petitioned to call the attention of the Powers signatory of the Berlin Treaty to the desirability of enforcing Article XXIII of that instrument.

I have not been able to obtain any precise details as to the recent strengthening of the frontier guards in Eastern Roumelia. I am told that a company was lately added to the force stationed at Stanimaka, and I recently met a small detachment of some twenty men *en route* for Peshtera.

Some eight or ten peasants were recently arrested at Markovo, presumably for participation in the Macedonian movement, and I have been informed from several sources that a band numbering about thirty was, until a few days ago, hiding in the neighbourhood of Pérushtitsa, waiting for arms and equipment to cross the frontier into Macedonia. I have not yet heard whether it has left the above neighbourhood.

I have not received any information with regard to the whereabouts of General Tsoncheff.

I have the honour to inclose, however, a translation of a paragraph in the newspaper "Vecherna Poshta" of the 8th (21st) October, which might possibly throw some light on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 304.

Extract from the "Vecherna Poshta" of October 8 (21), 1902.

(Translation.)

HOW TSONTCHEFF CROSSED THE FRONTIER.—We have received information from the village of Rilo that on the 1st instant General Tsontcheff passed through there, in the company of another officer. The General himself was dressed in the uniform of an under-officer, his own uniform being concealed in the carriage. The officer who accompanied him to Rilo returned with the carriage. It is supposed that Tsontcheff's band consisted at first of about thirty.

No. 305.

Sir R. Rodd to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 29.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, October* 29, 1902.

MACEDONIA: With reference to my telegram of the 22nd instant.

Signor Prinetti told me to-day that the latest information received from the Italian Consuls in regard to the movement in Macedonia was of a very reassuring character, in so far as it concerned immediate developments. His Excellency gathered that most of the Powers were sending no reply to the Turkish note.

No. 306.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 31.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie a l'honneur d'informer, de la part de son Gouvernement, sa Seigneurie le Marquis de Lansdowne, que le Comité révolutionnaire Macédonien Mikhailovsky–Zontcheff a décidé dans une réunion privée de transmettre des télégrammes à Rome, Londres, et Paris, ainsi qu'aux Sociétés Panslavistes à Saint-Pétersbourg et Moscou leur enjoignant, en vue de la protection des Chrétiens habitant les provinces de l'Empire Ottoman, de s'adresser à cet effet aux Consuls étrangers à Sophia et d'envoyer Mikhailovsky en Europe pour qu'il fasse en personne des démarches et des communications dans ce sens.

La Sublime Porte ajoute que d'après un télégramme du Vali de Salonique les habitants des villages de Tchapara qui ont déjà regagné leurs foyers ont déclaré que tous les brigands qui les avaient forcés à se retirer dans les montagnes faisaient partie de la milice Bulgare.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 30 *Octobre*, 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires has the honour to inform the Marquess of Lansdowne on the part of his Government that the Macedonian Revolutionary Committee Mikhailovsky–Tsontcheff decided at a private meeting to send telegrams to Rome, London, and Paris, as well as to the Panslavist Societies at St. Petersburgh and Moscow, begging them, with a view to the protection of the Christians inhabiting the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, to address themselves to this effect to the foreign Consuls at Sophia, and to send Mikhailovsky to Europe that he may take the necessary steps in person and make communications in this sense.

The Sublime Porte adds that, according to a telegram from the Vali of Salonica, the inhabitants of the villages of Tchapara who have already returned home, declared that all the brigands who had forced them to retire to the mountains belonged to the Bulgarian militia.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
October 30, 1902.

No. 307.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October 25, 1902.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a paraphrase of a telegram received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica respecting the recent outbreak in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 307.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Salonica, October 24, 1902.*

UP to the evening of the 23rd October telegrams received by the Vali report that all the inhabitants of fifteen villages have returned home.

There were encounters at Djumabaia on the 20th and 21st, in which it is rumoured the soldiers had five casualties and the bands lost eighteen killed and several wounded. Doncho is stated to have escaped.

Ransom is demanded by the bands for the captives from the village of Hochtrovo.

No. 308.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord, *Salonica, October 25, 1902.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, respecting the recent outbreak in Macedonia and a general amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 308.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, October 20, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose an official, or as the Vali calls it, an inspired, publication in the Salonica paper giving details up to the 20th of the outbreak in the Mutessariflik of Serres.

This is the first instance where a publication so detailed has been made by the local authorities here.

The report of our Acting Vice-Consul at Serres (reference to my telegram of the 12th instant), with the exception of the annihilation of half-a-battalion at Cresna, does not differ from this statement to any great degree, as it mentions by name six villages, and several ("plusieurs") others, the inhabitants of which have taken to the mountains. Dr. Theodorides spoke of twenty-two, which may be taken as covering nearly the same number.

With the exception of the Austrian Consulate-General, which received a somewhat similar communication from its Agent and the Greek Consulate-General who obtained some news from a chance passenger, no other Consulate has the least information as to the occurrences in the disturbed districts. No one has been allowed, since the first days of the outbreak, to travel either way, in the Mutessariflik of Serres, and in consequence of this prohibition, Dr. Theodorides has been unable to send, as I had instructed him, a trusted man to the scene of action.

The Bulgarian Commercial Agent, whom I saw this morning, cannot add in the least to the news we received, and is astonished at the inspired publication, which, he considers, contains sufficient information to give an idea of what has really taken place. To my question whether he thought all would be quiet in a week, he said in five days, or less.

An Iradé granting general pardon to all who have been induced to take up arms has been sent yesterday for publication in the districts by the Vali, who expects most salutary results.

Under date of the 18th instant, Dr. Theodorides reports that on the 13th at Bousdevo, Caza of Melnik, Doncho murdered a Notable Bulgarian, called Danky, who had refused to induce his fellow villagers to join the movement.

Doncho at the head of upwards of 150 men and a certain Stoyan with another numerous band were seen on the side of Raikofeknet and Singel, villages an hour north of Demir Hissar Station, between Menlik and Demir Hissar. It was in this vicinity that took place the encounter mentioned to me yesterday by the Vali.

Dr. Theodorides says he received no information from other districts, but the authorities assure him that things are getting quiet everywhere, and that many peasants are returning to their homes.

Haidar Pasha has left for Djumabala.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 308.

Extract from the "Journal de Salonique" of October 20, 1902.

DES bandes de brigands Bulgares armés ont fait leur apparition dans les régions de Razlock et de Djouma-i-Bala, dépendances du district de Serrès, et y ont suscité des troubles. Les populations Bulgares de quelques villages limitrophes excitées et forcées par ces bandes à se joindre à elles, ont quitté leurs villages et se sont enfuies dans les montagnes. Aussitôt la nouvelle parvenue à Serrès, des forces suffisantes, détachées des troupes, sous le commandement du Général de Division, Ibrahim Pacha, ont été envoyées contre ces bandes. Il résulte maintenant des télégrammes que l'on reçoit successivement d'Ibrahim Pacha, du Commandant du 3e Corps d'Armée et des autorités de Salonique, que les bandes Bulgares, attaquées vigoureusement et dans un ordre parfait par les troupes, ont été mises en déroute; les unes se sont enfuies, et les autres ont été capturées et livrées à la justice. Quant aux villageois Bulgares qui avaient accompagné les bandits dans les montagnes, la plupart d'entre eux, à la suite de la déroute de ceux-ci, ont fait leur soumission et ont regagné leurs villages en déclarant qu'ils ne les avaient quitté que parce qu'ils y avaient été forcés par les bandits. Ils ont même commencé à livrer aux autorités locales les armes qui leur avaient été distribuées.

Les habitants des villages Selpin, Gradova, Uranova, dépendances de Djouma-i-Bala; de Buzdova, Ouvlah, dépendances de Menlik; de Icomindja, dépendance de Petrich, et les habitants de plusieurs villages limitrophes à proximité de Stroumnitza; se considérant responsables de leurs actes devant le Gouvernement et craignant d'être punis, ne sont pas retournés dans leurs villages. Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan leur a, sur leur demande, accordé l'amnistie. Cet acte de clémence Impériale leur a été communiqué soit par les autorités locales, soit par les prêtres de ces villages.

Les habitants des villages Mihumia, Banska, Yacourit, dépendances de Razlock, ainsi que ceux de plusieurs villages de Nevrocop, qui étaient enfermés dans leurs maisons, purent reprendre leurs affaires dès que les troupes Impériales y firent leur apparition. Le Codja-Bachi du village Moraska, dépendance de Petrich, qui, d'accord avec les Notables Bulgares de cette localité, avait refusé de se rendre aux montagnes, fut assassiné par le chef de la bande Bulgare.

Les fils télégraphiques de la jonction entre les stations Hadji-Beylik et Kilindir, qui avaient été coupés par les bandes, furent le jour même réparés, la circulation ne subit le moindre retard et la ligne ferrée est gardée militairement; les ouvriers travaillant sur la chaussée Razlik-Djuma, attaqués par les bandes Bulgares, ont subi quelques pertes et ce n'est que grâce à l'arrivée immédiate de nos troupes que le reste des ouvriers ont pu être secourus.

Des rencontres un peu sérieuses se sont produites à Zebznitza, dépendance de Djuma; Gureno, dépendance de Petrich; Barbarono, dépendance de Stroumnitza. Des deux côtés, les pertes ont été insignifiantes.

Les bandes résidant dans les districts de Djuma, Raslok, et Melnik, à proximité des lignes de démarcation, cernées par les troupes Impériales, regagnent le territoire Bulgare.

Ces actes de brigandage qui se sont produites il y a quelques jours, ne pourront naturellement pas se prolonger, grâce aux mesures prises par le Gouvernement. Aussi,

d'après les mêmes télégrammes, la tranquillité commence-t-elle à revenir dans ces régions où très prochainement toute trace de brigandage aura disparu.

(Translation.)

SOME bands of armed Bulgarian brigands have made their appearance in the regions of Razlog and Djuma-i-Bala, dependencies of the district of Serres, and have there provoked disturbances. The Bulgarian population of some of the frontier villages, excited and forced by these bands to join them, have left their villages and fled to the mountains. As soon as the news reached Serres, a strong force under the command of Ibrahim Pasha, General of Division, was detached from the troops and sent against these bands. It now appears from telegrams from Ibrahim Pasha, from the Commander of the 3rd Army Corps, and from the authorities at Salonica, that the Bulgarian bands, attacked vigorously by the troops, in perfect order, were put to flight; some have escaped, and others have been captured and handed over to justice. As for the Bulgarian villagers who accompanied the bandits into the mountains, the majority of them, on the defeat of the bandits, made their submission and returned to their villages, saying that they only left them because they were forced to by the bandits. They have even begun to hand over to the local authorities the arms which had been distributed among them.

The inhabitants of the villages of Selpin, Gradova, and Uranova, dependencies of Djuma-i-Bala; of Buzdova and Uvlah, dependencies of Melnik; of Icomindja, a dependency of Petrich, and the inhabitants of several frontier villages in the neighbourhood of Strumnitza; thinking that the Government will hold them responsible for their acts, and fearing punishment, have not returned to their villages. His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has, on their Petition, granted them an amnesty. This act of Imperial clemency has been communicated to them, either by the local authorities or by the priests of these villages.

The inhabitants of the villages of Mihumia, Banska, and Yacurit, dependencies of Razlog, as well as those of several villages of Nevrokop, who were shut up in their houses, were able to resume their business as soon as the Imperial troops appeared there. The Kodja-Bashi of the village of Moraska, in the district of Petrich, who, in agreement with the Bulgarian Notables of that place, had refused to betake himself to the mountains, was murdered by the chief of the Bulgarian band.

The telegraph wires joining the stations of Hadji-Beylik and Kilindir, which had been cut by the bands, were repaired the same day, and communications were not delayed at all: the railway is guarded by troops; the workmen employed on the road from Razlog to Djuma were attacked by Bulgarian bands, and sustained some losses, and it is only thanks to the prompt arrival of our troops that the remainder of the workmen could be rescued.

Somewhat serious encounters took place at Zebznitza in the Djuma district, Gureno in the Petrich district, and Barbarono in the Strumnitza district. On both sides the losses were insignificant.

The bands occupying the districts of Djuma, Razlog, and Melnik, near the frontier, being inclosed by the Imperial troops, returned to Bulgarian territory.

Thanks to the measures taken by the Government, these acts of brigandage, which took place a few days ago, will, of course, not continue. According to the same telegrams, quiet is beginning to be restored in these parts, from which all trace of brigandage will have shortly disappeared.

No. 309.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 3.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October* 28, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 21st instant, I inclose herewith a précis of further despatches received on the subject of the disturbances in Macedonia.

Sir Alfred Biliotti's report from the Acting Consular Agent at Monastir alludes to the murder of some Christians of Tchairli by agents of the Bulgarian Committee, and he also hears from Serres that several villagers and some children were killed by the Turkish troops following up the revolutionary bands, but both reports seem to require further confirmation.

The Turkish troops seem to have lost heavily in their combats with the insurgents,

and I am informed that thirty odd wounded Turkish soldiers arrived at the Military Hospital here to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 309.

Précis of Despatches respecting the Disturbances in Macedonia.

ALL the bands in the Petrich and Juma Bala districts have been repulsed to the Malesh Mountains; the Chief, Doncho, who is reported to be desirous of crossing into Bulgaria, is said to be in Mount Perin. Meanwhile, a general amnesty has been proclaimed for all the villagers who had deserted their homes on the approach of the bands.

All the inhabitants of five villages, and most of those of three others, have returned to their homes, as well as many families in different villages.

About the 12th October a fierce fight took place at Godena, in which the insurgents' losses were considerable; fights were also reported as having taken place at Klissa Mahalessi (Melnik) and Sirbinovo (Juma Bala). At Crovchoriati a band of fifteen was besieged by the troops who burnt fifteen houses, and whose conduct in looting, &c., was complained of by the villagers to the Russian Consul at Monastir.

Two Christian Notables, while carrying the taxes of their villages, and accompanied by a military escort, were murdered at two hours' distance from Monastir.

On the 12th October 600 troops left Monastir for the Bulgarian frontier; 1,600 recruits arrived from Smyrna at Salonica.

Doncho's band of over 150 strong was on the 13th reported to be between Melnik and Demir Hissar; also another numerous band, under one Stoyan. Things are becoming normal again. The telegraph wires, which had been cut, are repaired.

On the 20th and 21st October encounters were reported at Juma Bala, in which the bands are said to have lost eighteen killed. The soldiers had fifteen casualties.

The most complete account of the outbreak received is as follows:—

The inhabitants of the village of Kresna, being supplied by the Committees with arms, decided, at their instigation, to revolt. Joining the bands, they seized the Kresna defile, through which runs the Demir Hissar–Juma Bala road, and thus cut off the communications between the Bulgarian frontier and Serres. The defile takes six hours to pass, and the Bulgarians were able to hold several strong positions near the bridge over the Struma.

Troops were at once sent to dislodge the Bulgarians, who withstood, during a three days' contest, the infantry sent against them, but were unable to stand against the artillery when brought up, and fled to the hills with but insignificant losses. The Turks lost 250 soldiers killed and wounded. The rebellion also broke out in the Caza of Petrich. In the time-honoured fashion the Turkish tax collector and rural guards were killed and the inhabitants of several villages joined in arms under the command of a Bulgarian officer named Stoyanoff, taking up a strong position near Goremno. In this instance, also, the Turks were at first driven back, but when reinforcements arrived they took the Bulgarian positions.

In both cases it is asserted that during the pursuit the Turks committed acts of pillage, and even put peasants to death. The damage done by the insurgents to the railway and telegraph lines was soon repaired. The villagers are now returning to their homes unmolested by the Turkish authorities. In some cases they have given up their arms to them. The bands have mostly returned to Bulgaria, but some are still said to be lurking in the mountains, and are being pursued by the military.

From Monastir the following items of news have been received:—

At the village of Chairli several Bulgarians were murdered on the 15th instant, and their houses burnt, by order of the Perlepe Committee, as a punishment for having given information to the Turkish authorities as to the whereabouts of the bands. Such is the terror inspired by the bands that no one dare to come to the rescue of the victims, or to put out the conflagration.

The Turkish Minister of War confirms the rumoured capture of Colonel Yankoff, the Bulgarian revolutionary leader, near Monastir, and the death of another near Osmanie, He acknowledged that the fight in the Kresna defile was severe, and mentioned that the Bulgarians, besides killing some Moslems in the village, had put to death several Moslem

workmen engaged in constructing the *chaussée* from Demir Hissar to Juma. He has now twenty-three battalions in the Serres district under the command of Ibrahim Pasha, a very capable leader. No troops were sent from Constantinople.

No. 310.

Mr. C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, October 29, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, immediately on receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 17th instant, I called at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and inquired of M. Argyropoulo as to the views of the Russian Government on the Turkish Circular to the Powers, complaining of the increased activity of the revolutionary Committees in Bulgaria and of the failure of the efforts of the Turkish authorities to obtain the dissolution of the Committees and the punishment of agitators who had taken refuge in Bulgaria. I asked at the same time whether any reply had so far been made by the Russian Government to this communication.

M. Argyropoulo informed me, in reply, that he did not think he would be able to give me the information which your Lordship desired without first consulting Count Lamsdorff at Yalta; and he asked me to be so good as to embody the substance of my inquiry in a private Memorandum, which he could forward to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he expressed the hope that he would be able, within a short space of time, to acquaint me in a similar form with Count Lamsdorff's reply.

He further stated that according to the reports received from the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and from the Russian Consuls in Macedonia, the agitation was quieting down and the situation was not serious. The Bulgarian Government, he said, had given very definite assurances to the Russian Government that no encouragement would be given to the revolutionary Committees in Bulgaria or to the movement in Macedonia, and they had acted very correctly in taking the necessary military measures for maintaining order on the Bulgarian frontier and for preventing the passage of the frontier by Bulgarian armed bands. As an example of the energy and good faith of the Bulgarian Government, he quoted the arrest of Colonel Tsontcheff, to which I remarked that I could hardly agree, since Colonel Tsontcheff had been arrested immediately before the Shipka celebrations, and as soon as they were over he had been allowed to escape. M. Argyropoulo added that in any case it was to be anticipated that such agitation as might exist in Macedonia would gradually disappear with the approach of winter and with the fall of snow on the mountains.

On my return to His Majesty's Embassy I sent to M. Argyropoulo, in accordance with his request, a private Memorandum, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith. As ten days had elapsed yesterday since forwarding this Memorandum, I pressed M. Argyropoulo for a reply, but he informed me that he had received no answer from Count Lamsdorff to my communication.

I have ascertained that when Husni Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador, presented the Turkish note to Count Lamsdorff just before his departure to the Crimea, the former complained bitterly of the apathy of the Powers in not exerting pressure to restrain the Bulgarians. Count Lamsdorff, in reply, gave Husni Pasha good advice, and promised to urge circumspection and moderation upon the Bulgarian Government.

From the statement made to me by M. Argyropoulo that definite assurances of a satisfactory nature had been given by the Bulgarian Government, I gather that Count Lamsdorff fulfilled the promise which he made to Husni Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

Inclosure in No. 310.

Memorandum.

(Particulière.)

EN réponse à la note Circulaire adressée aux Grandes Puissances par le Gouvernement Ottoman le Marquis de Lansdowne a informé le Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie qu'il serait nécessaire de conférer avec les autres Puissances avant d'arriver à une décision quelconque. Vu que le mouvement paraîtrait être un mouvement populaire il ne serait pas probable qu'un Gouvernement Bulgare s'y opposerait sur le conseil d'une seule Puissance. Une représentation plus forte serait nécessaire.

Le Chargé d'Affaires d'Angleterre a été chargé par le Marquis de Lansdowne de demander l'opinion du Gouvernement Impérial sur la Circulaire Ottomane, et si le Gouvernement Impérial y a fait une réponse.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi serait prêt à coopérer dans tout effort pour empêcher aux désordres actuels de s'étendre.

Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique,
St. Pétersbourg, le 5 (18) *Octobre*, 1902.

(Translation.)

IN reply to the Circular note addressed to the Great Powers by the Ottoman Government, the Marquess of Lansdowne informed the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires that it will be necessary to confer with the other Powers before arriving at any decision. As the movement seems to be a popular one, no Bulgarian Government would be likely to oppose it on the advice of one Power alone. A stronger representation would be necessary.

The British Chargé d'Affaires has been instructed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to ask the opinion of the Imperial Government upon the Ottoman Circular, and whether the Imperial Government has answered it.

His Majesty's Government would be ready to join in any effort to prevent the existing disorder from spreading.

British Embassy, St. Petersburgh,
October 5 (18), 1902.

No. 311.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 4, 1902.

I HAVE received your despatch of the 20th ultimo, reporting a conversation which you had with the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the movement in Macedonia.

I approve the language which you held to M. Daneff in regard to the attitude of the Bulgarian Government towards the Macedonian Committees in Bulgaria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 312.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 10.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 4, 1902.

IN continuation of my despatch of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a Summary prepared by Mr. Blech of the events in Macedonia as reported in the despatches received from His Majesty's Consular Officers during the past week.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 312.

Summary by Mr. Blech respecting Events in Macedonia.

THE following details have now been supplied by Sir A. Biliotti concerning the insurrection at two villages, named Sborsko and Tashin, in the Karajova district. Sborsko had been the scene of disturbance last year, and has long been considered as a focus of insurrection. The other villages of the Karajova district hesitated to give ear to the instances of the Committee, but the people of Sborsko and Tachin showed no reluctance, having one or two misdeeds on their conscience. They readily fell in with the advice of the Committee under Captain Pavlo, packed up as many of their valuables as possible, and

sent these, with all the provisions they could collect, to places of safety in the hills. At the last moment the rising was countermanded, but it was too late to draw back. The exodus took place, and four Turks whom the villagers met were killed. Shots were also exchanged with the zaptiehs. After the Bulgarians had left their homes, the Moslems of the surrounding villages looted all the houses of Sborsko. The insurgents, convinced that the rising was general, were planning an attack on the town of Vodena. Their numbers were, however, insufficient, and, two days later, the arrival of a strong body of troops put an end to the design. Since the promulgation of the amnesty, some thirty-nine men of Sborsko and Tashin have returned to their homes, but were at once handcuffed and taken to Vodena, being, according to some reports, which are, however, unconfirmed, flogged on their way through Turkish villages in order to raise the *morale* of the Mussulman population. It is now reported that all the prisoners have been released save one, the owner of the house where the tax-collector and his two companions were murdered. The rebels in this district only once came into collision with the troops, who lost ten killed. The failure of the outbreak has broken the spirit of the Bulgarians, who are exposed to vexations on the part of the Mussulmans, especially the Redifs of Karajova, according to a report; these have, however, now been sent to the front, and no complaints having been made against the regular troops, Sir A. Biliotti is not inclined to believe the charge against the Redifs.

Much distress now prevails among the villagers, who now say that they were given to understand that Russia was supporting the movement.

Tranquillity prevails generally, but on the 19th October an encounter took place at Gornitsa, three hours north of Nevrokop; the result is unknown, but some soldiers were brought in wounded.

The newly-appointed Italian Consul has arrived at Uskub.

Shemsi Pasha is still in pursuit of Moustafa Aga, the Albanian who destroyed the railway line between Uskub and Mitrovitza, and, accompanied by a considerable force, he has visited several villages where Moustafa might be concealed; severe measures have been taken against those suspected of being his adherents. The collection of taxes is also being proceeded with with much energy, and it is thought that this show of vigour on the part of the Government may cow the Albanians.

On the 13th October an encounter is reported as having taken place between a detachment of eighty or ninety soldiers and some seventy Bulgarians, representing Yankoff and Kotteff's bands, near Bobishté, an hour from Klissoura. The bands occupied a narrow impregnable gorge, the only path leading to Klissoura, which the unsuspecting soldiers entered after sunset. During the first attack the troops lost from twenty to forty killed; the pass is still closed. Three members of a band having entered a neighbouring village to get bread on the 18th October were denounced, and the troops then attacked the village, killing the brigands, and subsequently setting fire to four houses. A Bulgarian priest having been murdered three weeks ago by Greeks, the Bulgarians in revenge killed the Greek priest of Episcopi, in the Okhrida district, as well as his infant son.

An encounter is also reported at Vignitsa, Kaza of Kochana, between troops and a a band, the latter losing seven killed, including a Captain in the Bulgarian army and and a doctor.

No. 313.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 10.)

My Lord, *Sophia, November* 5, 1902.

MR. HEARD, Acting Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, sends me the following information which comes from a person in close touch with the movement in Macedonia:—

"The original plan of the Bulgarian 'invaders' was to occupy the Struma Valley and Nevrokop district, thus shutting off the Razlog district, which they intended to use as a kind of base. For the realization of this scheme the co-operation of the Razlog people was of course necessary, but unfortunately for the schemers the Razlog peasants flatly declined to rise, and literally drove Tsoncheff away when he called on them to assist him. This was a serious blow to the insurgents, especially as the Razlog people were known to possess a large supply of arms. They refused, however, to have anything to say to the Tsonchevist faction, declaring that they would not rise before the proper time, and that they did not consider the time was yet ripe."

This account is corroborated from other sources, and by the foundation of truth to be extracted from the grossly exaggerated reports of the "Reformi," from which it appears that the centre of insurgent activity was the Struma Valley and the Pirim district.

When I saw the Ottoman Commissioner, Ali Ferruh Bey, a few days ago he expressed himself as quite satisfied not only with the state of affairs beyond the frontier but with the professions and the action of the Bulgarian Government. He did not then know whether any of the insurgent leaders had returned to Bulgaria; but a newspaper has since announced that Doncho, with sixty-three followers, has been brought under escort into Kustendil, and General Tsoncheff himself returned to Sophia viâ Dubnitsa yesterday evening, slightly wounded in the thigh. He told my informant, who met him at the railway station, that he had destroyed three Turkish frontier posts, and that it was in the attack on the third, at a place called Fakir Tepe, that he was wounded with several of his men. He had not been interfered with by the Bulgarian gendarmerie on his return. My informant had no opportunity to ask the general for his impressions on the situation in Macedonia.

M. Mikhailovsky, the President of the Macedonian Committee, has left Sophia on a lecturing tour through Europe.

Speaking to me the day before yesterday M. Daneff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that although things were quiet for the present, yet it was absolutely necessary for the Powers to do something to improve the condition of the Macedonian populations; for if, as was always possible, the rival organizations abandoned their dissensions and made common cause, it would be impossible to prevent serious disturbances

M. Westmann, the newly-appointed Russian Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, has been sent to Kustendil to report to the Russian Agent on the state of affairs on the frontier and the condition of the refugees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 314.

Hamid Bey to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 12.)

LE Chargé d'Affaires de Turquie présente ses compliments au Marquis de Lansdowne et, conformément aux instructions qu'il a reçues de son Gouvernement, a l'honneur d'informer sa Seigneurie que d'après des rapports du Commissaire Impérial Ottoman à Sophia ainsi que de l'Agent Commercial à Roustchouk, la Sublime Porte est à même d'exposer les faits suivants relativement aux agissements des Comités Révolutionnaires Bulgares.

A Sophia des affiches ont été apposées aux murs de cette ville par le Comité Bulgare Mikhailovski et aussi par le Comité intitulé, "Philippopoli Macédoine." Le Commissaire Impérial déclare que les dites affiches ne contenaient que des mensonges et qu'elles surexcitaient l'opinion publique pour recommander aux habitants de venir en aide aux deux Comités susmentionnés. Il ajoute que les agitateurs Kliman Teschkoff, Lazaro Leganoff, Lazaro Philipoff ont préparé un registre de souscriptions qu'ils font circuler de magasins en magasins et qu'ils recueillent ainsi beaucoup d'argent, un grand nombre de commerçants et de notabilités ayant contribué à ces souscriptions, dont le produit est employé à l'achat de vêtements pour les réfugiés Bulgares qui de la Turquie franchissent la frontière pour retourner en Bulgarie.

En même temps Hamid Bey est chargé de faire observer à sa Seigneurie que d'autre part les autorités Bulgares prétendent qu'elles font tout leur possible pour empêcher les agitateurs de franchir la frontière et qu'elles ont envoyé de Philippopoli à Stanamaka un peloton de cavalerie et de Bazardjik à Pochtra une compagnie d'infanterie contre les agitateurs, et que dans une rencontre ceux-ci qui portaient sur leurs képis les mots "Mort ou Salut" furent faits prisonniers. Les autorités Bulgares affirment qu'ils furent exilés.

La Sublime Porte insiste sur ce fait, à savoir qu'en réalité le Gouvernement Bulgare n'a absolument rien fait pour empêcher les actes signalés plus haut à la charge des Comités Révolutionnaires et elle a en outre à faire savoir à sa Seigneuris que les Bulgares ont commencé à maltraiter les populations Musulmanes dans cee localités.

Quant au rapport de l'Agent Commercial Ottoman à Roustchouk Hamid Bey a pour devoir d'exposer à sa Seigneurie ce qui suit.

Des excès et cruautés ont été récemment commis par des révolutionnaires Bulgares à l'égard des Musulmans de cette ville. En voici des exemples: Le nommé Ahmet, qui allait à son travail, a été attaqué et battu par ces malfaiteurs Bulgares. Il se trouve maintenant à l'hôpital de Roustchouk. Une vieille femme Mahométane qui allait puiser de l'eau a été frappée en plein jour d'un coup de couteau par les mêmes bandits au bras droit. Elle est également à l'hôpital. Le nommé Ibrahim, marchand de bonbons, à été si grièvement atteint par des mécréants Bulgares qu'il est mort des suites de ses blessures.

Bien d'autres Musulmans ont été attaqués et maltraités par les Bulgares à Roustchouk; ceux qui se sont présentés à la police pour se plaindre de ces méfaits ont reçu pour réponse qu'on ne pouvait rien faire pour eux.

Le Chargé d'Affaires a également à porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie que bien que ces forfaits et ces outrages soient perpétrés sous les yeux des autorités Bulgares, les criminels armés de fusils Martini et de revolvers se promènent dans les rues pour se lancer ouvertement à la poursuite des Musulmans.

Hamid Bey a pour devoir de déclarer que la Sublime Porte constate que les autorités Princières, nonobstant les assurances qu'elles ne cessent de donner au Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, permettent aux Comités de tenir des réunions sous leurs yeux, de se livrer à des agissements subversifs et de commettre à l'égard des Musulmans établis dans la Principauté des aggressions incompatibles avec les règles de la civilisation et de l'humanité.

Hamid Bey est conséquemment chargé de prier sa Seigneurie de faire à Sophia les communications qu'elle jugerait nécessaires pour que les promesses faites par le Gouvernement Princier soient tenues et que celui-ci soit forcé de prendre des dispositions propres à empêcher les vexations auxquelles les Musulmans se trouvant en Bulgarie sont en butte de la part des meneurs Bulgares.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 11 *Novembre,* 1902.

(Translation.)

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires presents his compliments to the Marquess of Lansdowne, and, in accordance with the instructions which he has received from his Government, has the honour to inform his Lordship that the reports of the Imperial Ottoman Commissioner at Sophia, and of the Commercial Agent at Rustchuk, enable the Sublime Porte to submit the following facts relative to the agitation of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees:—

At Sophia posters were stuck on the walls of the town by the Mikhailovsky Bulgarian Committee, and also by the Committee called "Philippopolis Macedonia." The Imperial Commissioner asserts that these posters contained nothing but lies, and that they excited public opinion with a view to induce the citizens to help the two above-mentioned Committees. He adds that the agitators, Kliman Teschkoff, Lazaro Leganoff, and Lazaro Philipoff have drawn up a register of subscriptions which they get circulated from shop to shop, and that thus they collect a great deal of money, a large number of business-men and notables having contributed to these subscriptions, which are used for the purchase of clothes for the Bulgarian refugees who cross the frontier from Turkey to return to Bulgaria.

At the same time Hamid Bey is instructed to call his Lordship's attention to the assertion of the Bulgarian authorities that they, for their part, are doing all they can to prevent the agitators from crossing the frontier, and that they have sent a detachment of cavalry from Philippopoli to Stanamaka, and a company of infantry from Bazardjik to Pochtra against the agitators, and that in an encounter some of the latter, wearing on their caps the words "Death or Salvation," were taken prisoners. The Bulgarian authorities state that they were exiled.

The Sublime Porte wishes to emphasize the fact that in reality the Bulgarian Government has done absolutely nothing to prevent the acts, referred to above as being done by the Revolutionary Committees, and the Sublime Porte has further to inform his Lordship that the Bulgarians have begun to ill-treat the Mussulman population in those districts.

As regards the report of the Turkish Commercial Agent at Rustchuk, Hamid Bey is to bring the following facts to his Lordship's notice:—

Excesses and cruelties have been committed recently by Bulgarian revolutionaries against the Musulmans of that town. Here are some examples:—

One Ahmet, who was going to his work, was attacked and beaten by these Bulgarian malefactors. He is now in the hospital at Rustchuk. An old Mahommedan woman who was going to draw water received a blow with a knife in the right arm from these same bandits in broad daylight. She is also in hospital. A sweet-meat seller named Ibrahim was so severely handled by some Bulgarian miscreants that he has died from the effect of his wounds.

Many other Musulmans have been attacked and maltreated by Bulgarians at Rustchuk; those who went to the police to complain of their ill-treatment have been told in answer that nothing can be done for them.

The Chargé d'Affaires is also to acquaint his Lordship that though these misdeeds and outrages are done under the eyes of the Bulgarian authorities, the perpetrators, armed with Martini rifles and revolvers, walk about the streets, ready to rush openly in pursuit of any Mussulmans.

Hamid Bey is instructed to state that the Sublime Porte maintains that the Bulgarian authorities, in spite of the assurances which they continue to give to the Imperial Ottoman Government, allow the Committees to hold meetings under their eyes, to engage in revolutionary proceedings, and to commit on the Mussulmans established in the Principality acts of aggression incompatible with the laws of civilization and of humanity.

Hamid Bey is therefore ordered to beg his Lordship to make such representations at Sofia as he may consider necessary to ensure that the promises made by the Prince's Government shall be kept, and that that Government shall be obliged to take suitable measures to stop the persecutions to which Mussulmans, residing in Bulgaria, are exposed at the hands of Bulgarian agitators.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
November 11, 1902.

No. 315.

Aide-mémoire communicated by Hamid Bey, November 15, 1902.

HAMID BEY a l'honneur de porter à la haute connaissance de sa Seigneurie le Marquis de Lansdowne qu'il vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement la communication suivante:—

Les bandes de brigands Bulgares qui, poursuivies par les troupes Impériales, ont dû retourner en Bulgarie, se prépareraient à franchir de nouveau la ligne de démarcation.

Le brigand Dontcho et ses acolytes qui, à leur retour de Kustendil, avaient été arrêtés par les autorités locales, viennent d'être remis en liberté.

D'autre part, le Lieutenant Bulgare Kurdoyef, préposé au poste de Tchernaeskala, sur la ligne de démarcation, accorde toute sorte de facilités aux brigands tant lors de leur passage dans les provinces limitrophes Ottomanes qu'à leur retour en Bulgarie. Il a même retenu les armes du dit Dontcho et de ses acolytes, pour les leur remettre au cas où ils feraient une nouvelle irruption, dans les vilayets de l'Empire.

Hamid Bey vient en conséquence prier sa Seigneurie le Marquis de Lansdowne de vouloir bien user de sa puissante influence auprès du Gouvernement Princier pour l'engager à sévir contre les brigands qui sont entrés dans la Principauté afin de les mettre dans l'impossibilité de renouveler leurs exploits.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 14 *Novembre*, 1902.

(Translation.)

HAMID BEY has the honour to draw the attention of the Marquess of Lansdowne to the following communication which he has received from his Government.

The bands of Bulgarian brigands which were pursued by the Imperial troops and compelled to return to Bulgaria, are reported to be preparing to cross the frontier again.

The brigand Doncho and his followers, who had been arrested by the local authorities on their return from Kustendil, have been liberated.

Further, the Bulgarian Lieutenant Kurdoyef, in charge of the frontier post of Tchernaeskala, is granting every facility to the brigands, both on entering the neighbouring Ottoman provinces and on returning into Bulgaria. He even kept the arms of Doncho and his followers, in order to return them in case of their making a fresh invasion into the Imperial vilayets.

Hamid Bey therefore earnestly requests the Marquess of Lansdowne to use his powerful influence with the Prince's Government to obtain from them a promise to take action against the brigands who have entered the Principality, in order to make it impossible for them to renew their agitation.

Imperial Turkish Embassy, London,
November 14, 1902.

No. 316.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 18, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a note from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires calling attention to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committees in Bulgaria and to the ill-treatment of Mussulmans in the Principality,* and requesting that His Majesty's Government will make representations to the Bulgarian Government on the subject.

I should wish to be furnished with your observations on the statements contained in this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 317.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 20, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a *note verbale*† from the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires stating that the Bulgarian bands which were forced by the Turkish troops to return to Bulgaria are about to re-enter Turkish territory, and requesting that the Bulgarian Government may be urged to prevent them from doing so.

I request that you will furnish me with your observations on this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 318.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 24.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 18, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a summary of the events which have occurred in Macedonia and Albania, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers during the past fortnight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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* No. 314.

† No. 315.

Inclosure in No. 318.

Summary of Events in Macedonia and Albania during the past Fortnight.

THE Mutessarif of Serres states that all Christians have returned to their homes, and that most of them have handed over their arms, upwards of 500 rifles of various patterns having been thus received. Sir A. Biliotti, November 4, 1902.

Some Bulgarians, probably belonging to Alexi's band, were surprised by troops while trying to cut the telegraph wires; an encounter followed, the result of which was one killed on each side.

Marshal Omer Rushdi Pasha has arrived from Constantinople and proceeded to the frontier.

Twenty-eight wounded soldiers have arrived at Salonica from Juma Bala.

A band of 140 strong was seen at the end of October lurking in the Belesh Mountain above Poroi (Caza of Damir Hissar).

Before retiring to Bulgaria for the winter season, Colonel Yankoff made a farewell speech at Zagorichani, his native village, asserting that the insurrection would continue its forward progress, and affirming that the aim of the revolutionists was to treat all Christians in Turkey with humanity and justice. The Bulgarians were to fraternize in their desire to obtain reforms suitable to the feeling and character of the population. These utterances, however, carry little weight; the natives took very little part in the movement, which was confined to one district, and its avowed humanitarian object is scarcely likely to be furthered by the crimes against non-Bulgarians by which it has been stained. Ditto, November 5, 1902.

Travellers from Nevrokop report that tranquillity now prevails, and that no violence has been complained of on the part of the troops or of the native Moslems. No trouble is at all likely to occur unless, in case the troops should remain unpaid, they should be driven by want to commit excesses. Ditto, November 7, 1902.

From Yanina reports continue unfavourable. Since his quarrel with Essad Pasha, Commandant of the Gendarmerie, the Vali, Osman Pasha, has ceased to attend at his office, thereby delaying the progress of public business. Ditto, November 5, 1902.

Mr. Millelire, who is acting as British Vice-Consul at Yanina, depicts public insecurity as great and growing worse. As an instance, he reports that the Turkish post was recently robbed between Prevesa and Yanina, but the gendarmes drove off the brigands. The Italian Consular mail was also robbed at less than one hour's journey from the town.

His Majesty's Embassy has since then learnt that Essad Pasha has been transferred to the Vilayet of Scutari, and that the Vali has now resumed attendance at his office.

No. 319.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 24.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, November* 15, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the substance of a statement said to have been made, in answer to a question, by M. Daneff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, before the Address Committee of the Sobranie. It contains an assertion that one Power is standing aloof from the endeavours of the others to obtain reforms in the administration of Macedonia.

I had hoped before reporting to your Lordship to ask M. Daneff whether he really made the statement alleged, and, if so, what he meant by it; but I have been prevented from doing so, in the first place, by his absence in attendance at the reception of the King of Roumania; and, in the second place, by the resignation of the Ministry, which took place immediately after his return.

Inclosure in No. 319.

Substance of Statement on the State of Affairs in Macedonia, made to the Address Committee of the Sobranie by M. Daneff, President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

IT is true that the situation in Macedonia is difficult. The extent of the rising, however, is exaggerated. The population in general has not risen. The Bulgarian Government has done, and is still doing, its duty. All the European Powers appreciate the loyal attitude maintained by the Bulgarian Government in the Macedonian business. With a view to our own national interests, as well as to the interests of the population beyond the Rilo Mountains, the Bulgarian Government puts forth all its strength for the purpose of hindering the passage of bands into Macedonia. You know how difficult this is. The frontiers of that region are very extensive, and it is consequently very difficult to guard them, especially against the passage of single individuals. At any rate, we are doing our best to guard the frontier well. If the Bulgarian Government did not take these measures to watch its frontiers, the European Powers would certainly assume that we are equipping the bands here and sending them across the frontier to foment and encourage insurrection, which is not true. In reality, the European Powers appreciate, with good reason, our loyal attitude, our efforts with regard to events in Macedonia; and all of them, with one exception, having convinced themselves that the rising in Macedonia is in consequence of the desperation to which the population is reduced by the administration of that province, are interesting themselves in the matter, and endeavouring, by pressing demands for the introduction of reforms, to obtain a settlement of this question.

No. 320.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 24.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, November 17, 1902.*

REPORTS of fighting in Macedonia, although less frequent, are still published by the "Reformi," but the danger of a serious rising is considered to be over, and the reservists who were called up to strengthen the frontier regiments have been dismissed to their homes.

It will be seen, however, from the inclosed despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, that men and arms are still being sent into Macedonia; and I was told yesterday by an officer in active employment, who has seen General Tsoncheff since his return, that the latter declares that fighting will be kept up all through the winter, and will spread into a general movement in the spring. He is, however, disappointed at the tactics of the Turks, who, whether for military or political reasons, do not pursue the insurgents, so that the latter are obliged to assume the offensive if tranquility is to be prevented from prevailing.

To my inquiry what he thought would be done to General Tsoncheff when he had recovered from his wounds, my friend replied that nothing would be done at all; and on my saying that Bulgaria could not continue to serve as a base of operations for the insurgents, instancing the case of the leaders Saeff and Sandansky, who both returned lately from Macedonia, and who are both now alleged by the "Reformi" to be in command of bands there and to have fought some successful encounters, the officer, who is by no means politically friendly to the present Government, said that M. Daneff and his colleagues had shown great courage in taking the measures they had done to prevent the passage of bands, and had tried the discipline of the army to the verge of insubordination. Many hundreds of would-be insurgents had been prevented from crossing; and it could be imagined what a trial that duty must be to officers, every one of whom sympathized with the movement.

Inclosure in No. 320.

Acting Vice-Consul Heard to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Philippopoli, November 11, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that an insurgent band, estimated at some twenty-four men, recently passed through Peshtera, *en route* for the Chepino district, further than which I have not been able to trace it.

I was informed yesterday that a person, who had left Kustendil on the 5th instant, reported matters as quiet there, and stated that he had seen nothing of the refugees, or of Doncho and his band, though he did not dispute their presence there.

He travelled up in the train with Tsoncheff, with whom he entered into conversation, in the course of which the revolutionary leader expressed himself as much disappointed at the way the Macedonian villages had responded to his appeal.

My informant added, though on what grounds he did not state, that he was confident that both men and *matériel* were being largely smuggled over the frontier at the present time. Ammunition was being sent into Macedonia in large quantities, including a number of dynamite bombs, the moral effect of which on the Turks is said to be considerable.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

No. 321.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, November 22, 1902.*

I SPOKE this morning to M. Daneff about the statement said to have been made by him before the Address Committee of the Sobranie and reported in my despatch of the 15th instant, to the effect that the Powers, with one exception, were pressing upon the Porte demands for the introduction of reforms in Macedonia.

His Excellency said he had been misreported. He had not meant to convey the impression that there was a definite scheme of reforms under discussion by the Ambassadors at Constantinople, and that one of them declined to associate himself with it; all he had said was that, according to the information received by the Bulgarian Government, there was a general agreement among the Ambassadors of the Great Powers, with one exception, that the introduction of reforms is imperatively necessary, and that with regard to that exception, the Bulgarian Government had no means of forming an opinion as to what the views of his Government are.

I then told M. Daneff I had seen a report of an answer returned by him in the Sobranie to a question put to him with regard to the statement made in the House of Commons on this subject, and that it appeared to me that he had been misinformed as to what Lord Cranborne had said. I showed him the "Times" report of Mr. Stevenson's question on the 6th instant, and of Lord Cranborne's reply. After reading it, his Excellency said an incorrect translation had been given him, which had made Lord Cranborne deny, not that he had any information respecting M. Daneff's alleged statement, but that there was any question of concerted action on the part of the Powers at all.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 322.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, November 22, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, in closing the debate on the address, M. Daneff, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, made a speech containing passages relating to the Macedonian question, of which the following is a summary:—

"The Macedonian question," he said, "interests us in two ways: firstly, from the purely national point of view, and secondly, from the influence it exerts upon our internal and external policy. The second point especially gives us cause for reflection. A great emigration forces its way into the country, seeking shelter and means of livelihood; the relations and friends of the emigrants remain behind in Macedonia maintaining a lively nterest in them; we are thereby infected, and our policy is influenced. This emigration must be stopped, and this can only be done by the removal of the causes of it; if, therefore, we take steps to obtain the execution of the Treaty of Berlin, we do so in order to obtain relief for ourselves from an uncomfortable position. This is the object which the Bulgarian Government must pursue. It must be declared *urbi et orbi* that the Bulgarian Government desires reforms in Macedonia in order to put an end at once to the want of

confidence of other Governments, and to their error in supposing the Bulgarians to be a barbarous and unruly element. A similar result was aimed at by the visit of His Majesty the King of Roumania.

"The Government has nothing in common with the Committees. The bands commit a crime against international relations. No one is in a position absolutely to close the frontier. The Government itself can do nothing; the granting of reforms does not rest with it, but it goes on working and making demands. In order that Bulgarians and Macedonians may live quietly in peace, the Government will demand reforms once, twice, and even three times; if no reforms follow, then happen what God will!"

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 323.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 27.)

My Lord, *Sophia, November* 22, 1902.

I ASKED M. Daneff this morning what was the truth about the refugees from Macedonia. He said there were several hundred of them in a very destitute condition, and although private charity was endeavouring to help them, it would be necessary to ask the Sobranie for a special credit for them.

I asked if he had not been able to arrange with the Turkish Commissioner to send them back to their homes. He replied that he had found the Commissioner well disposed to make an arrangement of that kind, but that he felt a moral responsibility to these people not to send them back until he knew what was in store for them. I said that from all I had heard, it appeared that the Turkish troops had committed no excesses. He said the regular troops had behaved well, but there had been numerous cases of rape and murder, and some villages had been burnt, by Bashi-Bozuks, or rather Mussulman peasants. Besides, the frontier district was one of the poorest portions of Macedonia, and the military requisitions had left hardly anything for the inhabitants to live upon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 324.

M. Métaxas to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received November* 29.)

Légation Royale Hellénique, Londres,
M. le Marquis, *le* 28 *Novembre*, 1902.

J'AI l'honneur, suivant les instructions de mon Gouvernement, de communiquer à votre Excellence le télégramme ci-joint, que j'ai reçu ce matin au sujet de la situation en Macédoine.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) D. J. MÉTAXAS.

(Translation.)

Royal Greek Legation, London,
M. le Marquis, *November* 28, 1902.

I HAVE the honour, in accordance with the instructions of my Government, to communicate to your Excellency the accompanying telegram, which I have received this morning on the subject of the situation in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) D. J. MÉTAXAS.

Inclosure in No. 324.

M. Zaimis to M. Métaxas.

(Télégraphique.) *Athènes, le* 14 (27) *Novembre*, 1902.

D'APRÈS les renseignements qui nous parviennent de la Macédoine, l'ordre y a été de nouveau troublé sur quelques points par les bandes Bulgares. La famille d'un

primat Grec de Matzikovo, et le premier notable du village Plevna, près de Drama, furent assassinés. Mais ce qui est plus grave encore, c'est que 400 Bulgares, parmi lesquels plusieurs portant l'uniforme Bulgare, se sont parvenus franchir la frontière le 29 du mois d'Octobre du côté de Razlok. Les détachements Turçs s'étant mis à leur poursuite, ils furent obligés repasser la frontière, après avoir subi de pertes considérables.

Le Gouvernement de sa Majesté Hellénique croit devoir vous prier de signaler ces faits à l'attention de son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, November* 14 (27), 1902.

FROM information which reaches us from Macedonia, it appears that order has again been disturbed in certain localities by the Bulgarian bands. The family of a Greek notable of Matzikovo, and the chief notable of the village of Plevna, near Drama, have been murdered. But what is still more serious is that 400 Bulgarians, several of them wearing the Bulgarian uniform, succeeded in crossing the frontier on the 29th October near Razlog.

Detachments of Turkish troops were sent in pursuit, and they were compelled to recross the frontier, after suffering considerable loss.

The Government of His Hellenic Majesty consider it their duty to instruct you to call the attention of his Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs to these facts.

No. 325.

Sir E. Egerton to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 1.)

(Extract.) *Athens, November* 22, 1902.

A FEW days ago the notorious Macedonian insurgent, the Bulgarian Major Yankoff, pressed hard by the Turkish troops, crossed over into Thessaly near Kalambaka with some followers.

He was arrested at Trikala by the Greek authorities; but there is no Extradition Treaty with Turkey, and it appears that the law does not justify his punishment by imprisonment here, and he has only been brought to Athens to be sent back with his companions by sea to Bulgaria.

No. 326.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 24, 1902.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica respecting events in Djuma Bala during recent disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 326.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, November* 19, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report following information, obtained from a completely impartial source, concerning events in the district of Djuma Bala during the late disturbances.

In addition to the natural difficulties connected with closely watching such a frontier as that which divides Turkey and Bulgaria, the carelessness of the Turkish officials made the passing of the Bulgarian bands a comparatively easy matter. Not only did the men cross with their beasts of burden, but they got even carts carrying various necessaries over.

When once a band had crossed, its members scoured the neighbouring villages, either persuading or compelling them to join their cause. The recalcitrant villagers and those who refused to swear to obey the call to arms were induced to take the oath by a threat to carry off their womenfolk to the mountains. The men were systematically enrolled and appointed to various ranks, and shown the place where the required quantity of arms and ammunition was concealed. These were frequently hayricks, and the Turks, after a little experience, generally began operations by firing these latter, subsequent explosions justifying their action. My informant tells me that the bands had managed to collect a very considerable quantity of arms and ammunition three or four months before the actual outbreak, and that a large part of them still remained hidden.

The disturbances began with the murder at Sarbinovo, a Bulgarian village of 321 houses, of ten tax collectors from the village of Kroupnik (100 Bulgarian, 66 Moslem houses). The Moslems of Kroupnik informed the authorities and joined the troops sent to Sarbinovo, where a fight ensued, the most serious that took place in Djuma Bala, during which, and later, lesser engagements 100 Bulgarians and fifty Moslems fell. The former, though they did their best, failed to rouse the latter to outrage.

The Bulgarian officials are apparently much more anxious to keep the bands out of Bulgaria when once they have crossed than to prevent their crossing. In such an attempt eight Bulgarian gendarmes were killed recently. The majority of the peasants returning from their flight to the mountains willingly surrender their arms, the rest are beaten till they do.

The Turkish officers, sent with some priests to different villages of the district to read the Proclamation of amnesty, were received at Bistritza, a Bulgarian village of 188 houses, with a volley, and after a fight, in which many were killed and wounded, the population fled to Bulgaria and had not returned a week ago, when my informant, who was at Djuma Bala during the disturbances, left the district.

It appears to be the object of the bands, if they cannot cross the frontier, to try and outlast the winter months in inaccessible parts of the country, in order to keep the disturbances simmering till next spring. Meanwhile, they are carrying off as many sheep as they can.

About ten days ago a Christian shepherd was carried off with his flock by a numerous band and released when the sheep were in safety on the Malesh Dagh. Another band carried off 700 sheep belonging to a Moslem at a distance of one hour and a-half from Belejé, in the Caza of Petritch. Smaller flocks were driven off from Godlevo and neighbouring villages, and though four companies were sent after them, the Bulgarians made good their escape in the direction of the frontier. I am told that Albanian Beys are actually shipping their flocks to Constantinople for safety.

I have heard from other sources that some of the Bulgarian bands cross the frontier in the uniform of Turkish soldiers or zaptiehs, others in that of the Bulgarian army. The following incident, which took place at Matchoukovo, in the Caza of Ghevgheli, proves beyond a doubt that they make use of, at all events, zaptieh clothing. Eight men knocked on the evening of the 12th November at the door of the Kojabashi of the village, Georgi Ribaris, and told him they had come to take over the taxes which he had collected. Deceived by the uniform the men were wearing, the Kojabashi opened the door. On discovering his error, he jumped through the window. The Bulgarians murdered his wife, his two sons, and two daughters, severely wounded the Moslem Begchi, and carried off 30*l.* which they found.

A few days before this event thirty-six armed Bulgarians, led by a certain Giovanni, a native of Ghevgheli, compelled the majority of the Patriarchist population of the Græco-Vlach village of Oshine, in the same district, to declare their adhesion to the Exarchist cause, with a view to swelling the Bulgarian ranks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 327.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 1.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November 26, 1902.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a summary of the events in Macedonia and Albania, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers during the past week.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 327.

Summary of Events in Macedonia and Albania during the past Week.

THE Mudir of a village close to Brejnitsa, two hours from Castoria, proceeded about a month ago to search for arms, which a shepherd had informed him were concealed in the Brejnitsa church. Sir A. Biliotti, November 15, 1902.

Accompanied by five native Christians, including the Bulgarian priest, he entered and searched the whole building, even having the stonework under the altar removed. The search proving fruitless, he gave a small sum to the priest, and requited his informant with a sound flogging. The incident was thereupon taken up by the Russian Consul at Monastir, who complained that the soldiers had committed sacrilege. The Vali applied to the Bishop of Castoria for information, and received, in reply, a report that it was not the soldiers, but four villagers, of whom two were Patriarchists, who, in the presence of their priest and by order of the Mudir, had removed the stone. The Vali then replied in that sense to the Consul (who had visited the church and had demanded that the Vali should send an official to be present at the purification of the church), adding that he claimed the right of searching even churches in the interests of public tranquillity.

Essad Pasha's transfer to Scutari is locally attributed to the influence of Osman Pasha in high circles at Constantinople.

From Drama the murder is reported of a Greek Notable of the neighbouring village of Plevna, committed by four Bulgarians on the 11th November. Ditto, November 20, 1902.

The motive seems to have been the strong Hellenic tendencies displayed by the murdered man. Three of the criminals were natives of the place, and the fourth a native of Bulgaria. The case is noteworthy from the fact that the Sanjak of Drama had hitherto enjoyed greater tranquillity than the neighbouring districts owing to the absence of Bulgarian propagandists, who found the strong Hellenic sympathies of the people and the inaccessible country sides unfavourable to their plans. Since the beginning of the year, however, Bulgarians have begun to settle there. Moreover, the authorities have contributed to the growth of "Bulgarism" by supporting a demand that the Church of Vissochan, a mixed village, should be handed over to the Exarchists, in spite of the protests of the Patriarchists. The Turks have thus contributed to increase the Bulgarian prestige and, perhaps, in consequence the growth of disorder; and whereas in 1901 there were only six Bulgarian-speaking villages with a very small percentage of Exarchists, there are now five completely Bulgarian, and six mixed Bulgarian-Turkish, villages, from which, Sir A. Biliotti states, the bands can draw recruits.

A Bulgarian band having failed to induce the Patriarchist villagers of Starchovo, 112 houses, in the Caza of Petrich, to become Exarchist, severely wounded several of the Notables about the beginning of November. Ditto, November 20, 1902.

A band 400 strong, mostly dressed in Bulgarian army uniforms, was about the 10th instant repulsed while trying to cross the Turkish frontier near the village of Godliouvo, Caza of Razlog. The revolutionaries suffered heavy loss, but managed to carry off 800 sheep.

From the Strumnitsa district the following incidents are reported:—

On the 7th November a tax-collector was wounded and three gendarmes killed at Bourievo, a village of forty houses, by a band of ten Bulgarians. A few days later this or another band met troops at the villages of Stenik (168 houses), Barbarevo (76), and Smolari (114), in the latter case the band numbering twenty men. The inhabitants fled and had not returned by the 15th instant.

The wounded soldiers brought to Constantinople are being tended with special care at the Hamidie hospital for children, and pensions have been granted to the families of several persons killed during the Kresna encounter.

No. 328.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 1.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, November* 28, 1902.

UPON receiving your Lordship's despatch of the 18th instant, transmitting to me for my observations a copy of the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires' note of the 11th instant, calling attention to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committees in Bulgaria and to the ill-treatment of Mussulmans at Rustchuk, I sent an extract from the note, so far as it related to the latter point, to Mr. Vice-Consul Dalziel, and instructed him to report upon it. I have now the honour to inclose his reply, from which it will be seen that while, on the one hand, he is able to add to the list of crimes recently committed against Mussulmans, on the other hand he does not consider any of them to be attributable to political motives, and in particular he was informed by the Prefect that the murderer of the man Ibrahim was himself a Turk.

Although recent events in Macedonia and the anticipation of further developments in a few months may have somewhat increased the tension between Mussulmans and Christians in Bulgaria, I have heard nothing to lead me to think that there has been any serious or general ill-treatment of the former.

With regard to the statement in Hamid Bey's note relating to the proceedings of the Macedonian Committee at Sophia, I have the honour to report that it is true that inflammatory notices were posted in Sophia during the recent movement, and that collections were made, some directly for the benefit of the Macedonian cause, and some for the relief of refugees. Collections for the latter purpose are still being made: in some cases the money is applied to the purpose for which it is given; in others it goes to the equipment of insurgents; and sometimes the only persons who benefit by the subscriptions are the collectors themselves.

The open collection of funds for the Macedonian Committee was almost entirely stopped by the Bulgarian Government some months ago. The improper diversion of charitable funds is more difficult to prevent. The refugees themselves appear to be fitting objects of charity, but there is now some question whether the amount subscribed for them will not be excessive. 10,000 roubles have been sent by the Slav Benevolent Society of Moscow; 10,000 fr. have been given by the Princess Clementine, and 5,000 fr. by Prince Ferdinand; a concert has produced 4,000 fr., and there are subscription lists besides. The number of refugees is estimated by the Ottoman Commissioner at 500, and by a member of a Ladies' Relief Committee (which is giving relief, not in money, but in clothing) at three times that number.

Ali Ferruh Bey says he had made all his preparations for sending them back to their homes in the charge of a member of his staff, under the Sultan's amnesty, but the Bulgarian Government had found a pretext for not allowing them to leave, their real reason, as he believes, being that they may display them before the world as victims of Turkish oppression.

The assertion of the Porte, repeated in Hamid Bey's note, that the Bulgarian Government has done nothing to prevent agitators from crossing the frontier, is incorrect. They did take measures, which were admittedly effectual up to a certain point; if they were not more so, allowance must be made for the difficulties alluded to in my despatch of the 17th November. It is constantly affirmed on the Bulgarian side that the Turks are negligent in guarding their own frontier; and this is confirmed by Sir A. Biliotti's despatch of the 19th instant, forwarded to your Lordship by Sir N. O'Conor in his despatch of the 24th instant.

Inclosure in No. 328.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Rustchuk, November* 27, 1902.

IN reply to your despatch of the 23rd instant, I have been informed, from time to time, by Abdul Kérim Bey, the Turkish Commercial Agent here, of the alleged facts

which have been submitted to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but as I have never been able to see any political motive for these crimes, there could be no object in reporting them to you. Crimes in all countries are of daily occurrence, and the Prefect, whom I have only been able to see to-day, informs me that a monthly report is made to the Ministry of the Interior at Sophia.

With regard to the specific allegations, the Prefect informs me that (1) Ahmed was attacked by two drunken Macedonians, brothers; that he resisted, and other Turks coming to his assistance, they punished the Macedonians very severely. These men then went further along the street and met the woman referred to (2), who was with another woman; it appears that they had seen or known of the fight, and made some observations to the Macedonians, and one of them did receive a cut in the hand, but she was very slightly wounded, and is not, and has not been, in the hospital, neither has Ahmed; but, on the contrary, both the Macedonians were, one with a broken leg, and both were arrested, and are at present out on bail. (3) Ibrahim, a Mussulman Albanian, was killed; but by a Turk from Bal-Bounar. The latter is in prison. (4) The Prefect denies that bands of Bulgarians, armed with Martinis, patrol the streets in pursuit of Turks, and I have never heard from other sources of such a state of affairs. The quarter of the town in which these events took place (Kara Aali Mahalle) is an outlying one, far from the Consulate and from any European houses, so that I have never any occasion to visit it; but also the quarter in which I live is an outlying one, and I have occasion, from time to time, to return home at late hours, and never thought of getting myself accompanied by a cavass, and seldom meet a living soul on the way.

The Prefect also informs me that he was asked to make a special report on the foregoing incidents by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. This he read to me in French; it is dated the 10th October, 1902, No. 11719.

I may here state, for your information, some other episodes of which I have heard: (5) About the end of October the house of Aali, at Odjak-Kieui, district of Bela, was broken into by burglars, who asked for money with threats, wounded Aali, his wife and daughter, badly, and decamped with 1 Turkish lira and 15 fr., which they found. For this it is said that a certain Koio is arrested; but the Prefect could give me no information in this case. (6) About a fortnight ago a joiner named Osman Oglu, of the village of Kadi-Kieui, was stabbed to death in his court-yard; the assassins are unknown. (7) On Sunday last two Turks, of the village of Katselo, district of Bela, were shot at and wounded by gendarmes, who supposed them to be running away to Roumania without passports; they are now here in hospital. The Prefect says there is one Turk in hospital, but the case is so recent that the instruction is not finished. (8) At Kavatza, district of Pope-Kieui, the house of Feizoula, 85 years old, was broken into at midnight by four masked men, two others remaining outside. Money was demanded, and as it was not forthcoming, Feizoula and his family were stabbed; the old man received twenty-four wounds, and is dead; his son and the latter's wife were only slightly wounded, but pretended to be dead. It is believed that the burglars found about 16 napoleons, and it is said that they have been arrested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. DALZIEL.

No. 329.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 1.)

My Lord, *Sophia, November* 28, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 20th instant, transmitting, for my observations, a copy of the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires' *note verbale* of the 14th, stating that the Bulgarian bands which were forced to return to Bulgaria are preparing again to cross the frontier, and that, in one case, their arms are being kept for them by the officer in command of a frontier post.

This latter seems such an extraordinary assertion that I have questioned the Ottoman Commissioner about it, showing him Hamid Bey's note. He declared that it was absolutely correct, and added that the officer previously in command of the same post had been removed upon his representations, owing to his open sympathy

with the insurgents, and had been replaced by this Lieutenant Kurdoyef, who had turned out worse than his predecessor.

I cannot doubt that, if the statement is true, and the matter is represented to the Bulgarian Government, they will have the arms removed to a place of security; but it is perfectly certain that unless some coercion more effectual than "internement" be applied to Doncho and other leaders they will make their way back into Macedonia, with or without arms, when the time comes for setting the movement going again.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 330.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Elliot.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 3, 1902.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a note from the Greek Minister inclosing a telegram from the Greek Government in regard to recent proceedings of Bulgarian bands in Macedonia.*

I request that you will furnish me with your observations on this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 331.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 4.)

My Lord, *Paris, December* 3, 1902.

M. DELCASSÉ said to me this afternoon that although he believed that certain French papers had much exaggerated the amount of the fighting in Macedonia, which had really consisted of nothing but skirmishes, he found that there was a general apprehension, of no uncertain character, as to the prospect of serious disturbances in the spring. All the French Agents in South-Eastern Europe had reported in this sense; and he found that at the various great capitals the same impression prevailed.

I observed that I regretted to have to say that from every quarter I had heard the same story. One could only hope that, as every one appeared to be prepared for the worst, there would be a unanimity in taking such preliminary precautions as were possible for confining within the smallest possible circle the outburst of the dreaded disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 332.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 8.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 1, 1902.

I LEARNT this morning from the Minister for Foreign Affairs that at a recent audience with the Sultan the Russian Ambassador alluded to the Macedonian question, and that his language was to the following effect:—

M. Zinovieff began by calling His Imperial Majesty's attention to the disorder prevailing in Albania, and dwelt on the necessity of taking measures to put an end to a condition of affairs which threatened the peace of the province. The situation in Macedonia also was most unsatisfactory; revolutionary bands roaming about the country harassed the inhabitants, and kept them in such a state of unrest that unless the Imperial Government removed the grounds of discontent and complaint, it was to be feared that this undesirable condition would be indefinitely prolonged. It was, therefore, of imperative necessity that the general administration in these provinces should be improved, that the gendarmerie, troops, and civil servants should be regularly paid, and that various reforms should be introduced, and among such ameliorations he thought that the representation in the gendarmerie of the Christian element should be included.

* No. 324.

M. Zinovieff went on to say that if measures to redress the legitimate grievances of the population were not now taken, the insurrectionary movement would certainly break out again in the spring with renewed force, and a situation would be created that would call for the interference of foreign Powers, and might possibly lead to an international Conference. Such a result, his Excellency said, would be to the interests neither of Turkey nor of Russia, and to assist His Imperial Majesty to avert such an eventuality he offered to prepare, in concert with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, and submit to the Sultan a paper which, without pretending to make any definite proposals, might serve as an *aide-mémoire* of the measures which the present situation appeared to demand. The Ambassador observed, however, that, even if the abuses in the administration were reformed, he could not guarantee that the agitation and revolutionary bands would disappear from Macedonia; but at any rate, the removal of the grounds of legitimate complaint would diminish their *raison d'être*, and they would no longer receive the support and encouragement of the population, while the Imperial Government would be able to take measures for the preservation of public order and general tranquillity in this part of His Majesty's dominions.

In reply, the Sultan said that it was unnecessary for his Excellency to go to the trouble of drawing up the Memorandum suggested, as there was already under consideration a scheme of administrative improvement which he felt sure would meet the political and economical requirements of the situation, and His Majesty's Ministers would be at once instructed to elaborate the projected reforms.

The Russian Ambassador's language seems to me particularly satisfactory, as giving evidence of a desire on the part of his Government to consult and act in concert with Austria in the Macedonian question, as stipulated in the Agreement made between the two Powers in 1897.

Just at present, owing to the difficulty of carrying on operations in the mountains during the winter, the condition of the Balkan Peninsula is relatively peaceful; but the Revolutionary Committees are active in organizing the inhabitants and urging them to join in the nationalist and anti-Turkish movement, and arms are being collected and importod for use whenever the opportune moment arrives. These and other indications point unmistakably to a more serious revolutionary outbreak in the spring, and it is highly desirable that all the Great Powers—and particularly the two which are more directly concerned by their geographical position and political interests—should urge on the Sultan the pressing necessity for removing the main grounds of the inhabitants' discontent by the introduction of real and important reforms into the general administration.

That His Imperial Majesty realizes the danger of allowing the present state of things to continue appears evident from the fact that Tewfik Pasha informed me to-day, when I questioned him on the subject, that already the scheme of which His Imperial Majesty spoke to M. Zinovieff had actually taken shape. It was discussed on the 27th, at a meeting of high officials which lasted late into the night, and the proposals then elaborated have been submitted to, and approved by, the Council of Ministers. A Commission, under the presidency of Ferid Pasha (an able and respectable official, and lately Vali of Koniah), is to sit permanently at the Porte throughout the winter to supervise the carrying out of the reforms; and two Inspectors—one of whom will be Hussein Hilmi Pasha, ex-Governor of Yemen, while the other is to be selected from the members of the Military Commission of Yildiz—will be sent to Macedonia, and will furnish Reports to the Commission in Constantinople.

The chances of satisfactory results following on the labours of this Commission, supported as it will be by the pressure of the Powers, must be estimated rather by the Sultan's apprehension of the danger of allowing the existing state of affairs to continue in the Balkans than by the success which has attended previous similar Commissions. His Imperial Majesty is no doubt aware that a general insurrection so close to his capital would imperil not only his European territory, but even his personal security, and that in certain given eventualities Bulgaria will be behind the Macedonian revolutionists. There is in this a certain assurance that reforms of some value will be proposed and introduced, which will tend to stay the revolutionary movement—at all events for a time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 333.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 8.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 3, 1902.*

THE text of the scheme of reform in the Administration of Macedonia reached me yesterday evening, and I have the honour to transmit a copy of it herewith to your Lordship.

There is not time before the departure of the messenger this morning for me to give proper study to this document, but I shall have the honour of submitting my observations on it to your Lordship at an early date.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 333.

Instructions concernant les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe.

Première Partie.—Organisation.

Chapitre I.—*Administration.*

ARTICLE 1[er]. Les Valis devront veiller à l'application de toutes les mesures propres à assurer le progrès des travaux publics, du commerce, de l'agriculture, et des institutions industrielles, ainsi que le développement de l'instruction publique.

Des postes de Directeur des Travaux Publics seront nouvellement créés auprès de chaque Vali.

Des Directeurs de l'Instruction Publique et de l'Agriculture seront aussi nommés dans les provinces où il n'en existerait pas.

Art. 2. Les affaires touchant les étrangers dans les provinces resteront comme par le passé sous la responsabilité des Valis. Un fonctionnaire ayant le titre de "Oumour édjnébié mudiri" (Directeur Politique), nommé par le Ministère de l'Intérieur et connaissant le Droit International, les dispositions des Traités et les usages diplomatiques, se trouvera auprès de chaque Vali. Les Drogmans des vilayets seront également nommés par le Département de l'Intérieur. Toutefois le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères devra certifier au préalable que les candidats proposés pour ces postes possèdent les connaissances requises.

Art. 3. Un poste de Caimaïcam sera créé au chef-lieu du vilayet pour s'occuper de l'Administration du Caza central.

Art. 4. Les Valis devront veiller à ce que les employés nommés par les vilayets possèdent les capacités requises. Quant aux Mutessarifs adjoints des Valis, Mektoubajis, Caimaïcams, et autres fonctionnaires, les documents relatifs à leur choix seront référés à la Commission du Personnel Civil, qui, après s'être livrée à une enquête et avoir demandé l'avis des Valis, procédera à leur nomination conformément au règlement.

Art. 5. La destitution, le remplacement, et la nomination des officiers supérieurs et subalternes de Gendarmerie, et des Directeurs et Commissaires de Police se feront par les Départements respectifs, avec l'avis des Valis.

Art. 6. Les gendarmes seront recrutés dans les provinces parmi les Musulmans et les Chrétiens. Ils devront, lors de leur nomination, prêter serment suivant la règle.

Art. 7. Parmi les Musulmans qui seront admis dans la Gendarmerie, ceux qui auront accompli leur service militaire sans avoir subi aucune condamnation auront la préférence. En dehors de ceux-ci, les individus, tant Musulmans que Chrétiens, qui seront engagés comme gendarmes, devront jouir d'une bonne réputation, et n'avoir subi aucune condamnation.

Art. 8. Le Commissaire et les agents de police des provinces seront recrutés parmi les Musulmans et les Chrétiens et seront, lors de leur engagement, assermentés conformément à la règle.

Ils devront également être honnêtes et probes, et n'avoir point subi de condamnation. Ils devront savoir lire et écrire le Turc. Parmi les Musulmans, ceux qui

possèdent ces qualités et auraient accompli leur service militaire seront considérés lors de l'engagement comme ayant un droit de préférence.

Art. 9. Dans le cas où un incident de nature à troubler l'ordre public dans la province viendrait à se produire et que l'insuffisance des gendarmes étant constatée, le vilayet jugerait nécessaire de disposer de troupes, le Gouvernement Général en avisera immédiatement le Commandant militaire, qui, tout en préparant des troupes, en informera télégraphiquement, sans perte de temps, le Ministère de la Guerre en vue de solliciter l'autorisation Impériale à ce sujet. Après avoir reçu en réponse communication de l'Iradé Impérial le Commandant avisera au nécessaire. Toutefois, lors d'une pareille éventualité, le Vali devra en faire l'exposé des motifs, qui sera également approuvé par le Commandant militaire.

Chapitre II.—*Justice.*

Art. 10. Dans les localités où il n'existe point de Tribunaux *Nizamiés*, il en sera établi conformément à la loi sur l'organisation judiciaire.

Le mode en vigueur aujourd'hui pour le choix des juges sera aboli, et les membres des Tribunaux qui devront avoir les capacités requises seront choisis par le Ministère de la Justice, moitié parmi les Musulmans, moitié parmi les Chrétiens comme par le passé. Les membres des Tribunaux devront appartenir à la carrière judiciaire, et les licenciés de la faculté de droit seront nommés de préférence.

Art. 11. Les Tribunaux de Première Instance, chargés des affaires civiles et pénales des Cazas, seront à l'instar de ce qui se fait dans les Sandjaks et dans quelques Cazas divisés en deux sections distinctes pour les procès civils et pénaux. Les Naibs continueront à présider les Tribunaux Civils. Pour les Tribunaux Correctionnels il sera nommé un Président de carrière, ainsi qu'un substitut du Procureur et un Juge d'Instruction.

Art. 12. Les Tribunaux seront indépendants et à l'abri de toute immixtion. Lorsqu'il sera constaté que les Juges et les fonctionnaires judiciaires auront commis des actes contraires à la loi et à la probité, les Valis et l'Inspecteur-Général en aviseront immédiatement le Ministère de la Justice. Ce Département devra les mettre sous jugement, après les avoir, suivant le cas, ou suspendus de leurs fonctions ou bien révoqués après un complément d'enquête établissant leur culpabilité.

Chapitre III.—*Instruction Publique.*

Art. 13. Il sera établi des écoles primaires dans tous les villages qui en son dépourvus et qui sont composés de plus de cinquante maisons.

On créera aussi, ou on augmentera le nombre, des écoles primaires et primaires supérieures dans les Cazas ainsi que des écoles primaires et des écoles secondaires mixtes dans les chefs-lieux des Sandjaks et des vilayets. L'enseignement dans ces écoles sera conforme aux programmes arrêtés par le Ministère de l'Instruction Publique.

Art. 14. Les deux tiers de la redevance de l'instruction publique de chaque province seront alloués aux frais de l'instruction publique de cette province et l'autre tiers aux écoles supérieures de la capitale.

Chapitre IV.—*Travaux Publics.*

Art. 15. Le système de prestation actuellement en vigueur pour la construction des voies de communication sera maintenu. Les 5 pour cent des revenus généraux de chaque province seront en outre affectés aux travaux d'utilité publique.

Seconde Partie.—Mode d'Exécution.

Art. 16. Les Gouverneurs-Généraux sont chargés de l'exécution des dispositions contenues dans les Articles précédents. En outre, il est nommé un Inspecteur-Général du rang de Vézir, et ayant à sa suite des fonctionnaires civils et militaires.

Art. 17. L'Inspecteur-Général aura pour mission :

1. De faire appliquer les dispositions précédentes ;
2. De signaler aux Valis les dispositions qui ne seraient pas exécutées et d'en aviser la Sublime Porte ;

3. D'exercer une surveillance sur les affaires civiles et financières, ainsi que sur les autres branches administratives des provinces, et de soumettre à la Sublime Porte les points qui nécessiteraient une amélioration ;

4. De révoquer, après s'être concerté avec les Valis, les fonctionnaires dont la destitution serait considérée nécessaire, et de faire traduire devant les Tribunaux compétents ceux qui auraient commis des actes exigeant leur mise sous jugement. Il devra aussi demander à la Sublime Porte de pourvoir au remplacement de ceux de ces fonctionnaires nommés par Iradé Impérial.

Art. 18. Il est instituée à la Sublime Porte une Commission composée d'un Président et de trois membres qui aura pour attributions d'examiner toutes les communications adressées à la Sublime Porte relativement aux mesures prises par les Valis pour l'application des dispositions qui précèdent et aux résultats de l'inspection exercée par l'Inspecteur-Général, de correspondre au besoin avec les Valis et avec l'Inspecteur-Général et de soumettre sans retard ses décisions au Grand Vézirat.

(Translation.)

PART I.—*Organization.*

Chapter I.—*Administration.*

ARTICLE 1. The Valis will see to the application of all measures calculated to insure the progress of public works, commerce, agriculture, and industrial institutions, and the development of public instruction.

A new post, that of Director of Public Works, will be created. Such an officer will be attached to each Vali.

Directors of Public Instruction and of Agriculture will also be appointed in the provinces where there are none at present.

Art. 2. Matters concerning foreigners in the provinces will be dealt with by the Vali as hitherto. An official styled "Umur edjnebie mudiri" (Political Director), appointed by the Ministry of the Interior and acquainted with international law, the provisions of the Treaties, and the usages of diplomacy, will be attached to each Vali. The Dragomans of the vilayets will also be appointed by the Department of the Interior. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must, however, previously certify that the candidates proposed for these posts possess the necessary knowledge.

Art. 3. A Kaïmakam will be appointed for the chief town of each vilayet to be at the head of the Administration of the central caza.

Art. 4. The Valis will see that the officials appointed by the vilayets are fit for their posts. As regards the Mutessarifs attached to the Valis, the Mektubjis, Kaïmakams, and other officials, the documents relating to their selection will be referred to the Civil Service Commission, which, after inquiring into the matter and consulting the Valis, will proceed to appoint them in accordance with the Regulations.

Art. 5. Superior and subordinate officers of the gendarmerie and Directors and Commissaries of Police will be dismissed, replaced, and appointed by the respective Dpartments in consultation with the Valis.

Art. 6. The gendarmes will be recruited in the provinces, among the Mussulmans and Christians. They must take an oath on appointment, in accordance with the rule.

Art. 7. In selecting Mussulmans for the gendarmerie preference will be given to men who have performed their military service without having been convicted of any offence. Apart from these, the men, whether Mussulmans or Christians, who are engaged as gendarmes, must have a good reputation and must not have been convicted of any offence.

Art. 8. The posts of Commissaries and policemen in the provinces will be filled by Mussulmans and Christians. At the time of their engagement they will be sworn in accordance with the rule.

They must be honest and well-behaved, and must not have been convicted of any offence. They must be able to read and write Turkish. Among the Mussulmans, those who possess these qualifications and who have completed their military service, will be considered to have a prior claim to be employed.

Art. 9. If an incident occurs which is likely to cause a disturbance in the province, and the vilayet, being of opinion that the force of gendarmes available is insufficient, considers it necessary to obtain the assistance of troops, the Governor-General will immediately inform the military Commander, who will get the troops ready and will

inform the Ministry of War by telegraph without loss of time, with a view to obtaining an Imperial authorization in the matter. On receiving a reply communicating the Imperial Iradé, the Commander will take the necessary steps. In such cases, however, the Vali must state his reasons, which must be approved by the military Commander.

Chapter II.—*Justice.*

Art. 10. In places where there are no Nizamié Tribunals, such Tribunals will be established in accordance with the Law in regard to the judicial organization.

The present method of selecting Judges will be abolished, and the members of the Tribunals, who must possess the necessary intellectual qualifications, will be chosen by the Ministry of Justice; half the number will be Mussulmans, and half Christians, as hitherto. The members of the Tribunals must be of the legal profession and licentiates of the faculty of law will be preferred to others.

Art. 11. The Tribunals of First Instance, dealing with civil and criminal matters in the cazas will be divided into two distinct sections for civil and criminal cases respectively, in accordance with the practice followed in the sanjaks and in some cazas. The Naibs will continue to preside over the civil Tribunals. For the criminal Tribunals a President of the legal profession will be appointed, as well as an Assistant Procureur and an Examining Judge.

Art. 12. The Tribunals will be independent and protected against any interference. When Judges or judicial functionaries are shown to have committed acts contrary to law and probity, the Valis and the Inspector-General will immediately inform the Ministry of Justice. That department will bring them to trial after, according to circumstances, either suspending them from the exercise of their duties, or else dismissing them after a supplementary inquiry establishing their guilt.

Chapter III.—*Public Instruction.*

Art. 13. Primary schools will be established in all villages which do not possess them, and which contain more than fifty houses.

Primary schools and higher primary schools will also be established in the cazas, or their number will be increased. Primary schools and mixed secondary schools will be established in the chief towns of sanjaks and vilayets, or their number will be increased. The instruction in these schools will be in conformity with the curricula settled by the Ministry of Public Instruction.

Art. 14. Two-thirds of the Public Instruction Tax of each province will be assigned to meet the cost of public instruction in the province, and the remaining third will be allocated to the higher schools of the capital.

Chapter IV.—*Public Works.*

Art. 15. The system of compulsory labour at present in force for the construction of ways of communication will be maintained. In addition 5 per cent. of the general revenue of each province will be appropriated to works of public utility.

Part II.—*Mode of Execution.*

Art. 16. The Governors-General are charged with the execution of the provisions of the preceding Articles. An Inspector-General holding the rank of Vizier, and having under him civil and military functionaries, is also appointed.

Art. 17. It will be the duty of the Inspector-General:

1. To see that the preceding Articles are carried out.

2. To call the attention of the Valis to any neglect to carry them out, and to inform the Sublime Porte of such neglect.

3. To exercise a supervision over civil and financial matters, and over the other branches of the provincial Administration, and to suggest to the Sublime Porte any improvements which he may consider necessary.

4. To dismiss, after consultation with the Valis, any officials whose dismissal may be considered necessary, and to cause to be tried by the competent Tribunals those who

commit acts rendering them liable to punishment. It will also be his duty to request the Sublime Porte to fill up the places of any of these officials who were appointed by Imperial Iradé.

Art. 18. A Commission is appointed at the Sublime Porte, consisting of a President and three members, charged with the examination of all communications addressed to the Sublime Porte in regard to measures taken by the Valis, for carrying out the provisions of the preceding Articles, and in regard to the results of the inspection carried out by the Inspector-General. The Commission will, if necessary, correspond with the Valis and with the Inspector-General, and will submit its decisions to the Grand Vizier without delay.

No. 334.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 10.)

My Lord, *Sophia, December* 6, 1902.

AT M. Daneff's weekly reception this morning, I asked his Excellency what were his impressions with regard to the measures announced as about to be taken to improve the condition of the population in Macedonia. He replied that previous experience made caution necessary in estimating the value of any promises of reform, and until they had got beyond the paper stage and a beginning of execution had actually been made, he should continue to be sceptical about them. Moreover, although some of the measures promised were good in themselves, especially that relating to the gendarmerie, they did not go to the root of the matter, but were defective in two essential particulars; no provision was made for the regular payment of salaries, nor for any foreign superintendence of the execution of the reforms. Without these two guarantees any scheme of reform must be illusory, and must be intended merely to throw dust in the eyes of Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT

No. 335.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 15.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 9, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block giving a list of the appointments made in connection with the reforms to be introduced into the administration of Roumelia, together with a few notes on the antecedents and qualifications of the new officials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 335.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

THE following are the appointments recently made with the object of introducing ameliorations in the administration of the Roumelian provinces:—

His Excellency Hussein Hilmi Pasha, Inspector-General.
His Excellency General Nassir Pasha, Assistant to Inspector-General.
His Excellency Ferid Pasha, President of the Commission sitting at the Porte.
His Excellency Medjid-ed-Din Effendi, Member of the Commission.
His Excellency Emin Bey, Member of the Commission.
Suleiman Faik Bey, Secretary of Commission.

His Excellency Hussein Hilmi Pasha was formerly Inspector-General of the Yemen. He is an honest and conscientious official.

His Excellency General Nassir Pasha is a General of Division. His administrative capacities are unknown. He has the reputation of being an intelligent and well educated

man; he has been employed on Missions to foreign Courts. He went to London with Munir Pasha and Turkhan Pasha.

His Excellency Ferid Pasha is late Governor-General of Konieh, where he has done well; he is an Albanian.

His Excellency Medjid-ed-Din Effendi is an ex-Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, and is now a Member of the Commission for the nomination of civil functionaries. He is little known, and was at one time the steward of Senié Sultana the sister of the Sultan.

His Excellency Emin Bey is a Magistrate, being President of the Court of Appeal, civil section. He is reputed a good official.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

December 8, 1902.

No. 336.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 15.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, December* 9, 1902.

JUST as the Messenger was leaving last Wednesday, I received from the Sublime Porte a copy of the proposals elaborated by the Council of Ministers, under order from the Sultan, for reforms and improvements in the administration of the Roumelian and Macedonian Provinces of Turkey. This scheme has, I understand, been under consideration for some time past, and the Sultan took the opportunity of representations made to His Majesty by the Russian Ambassador on his return from Livadia towards the end of last month to make it public.

The proposals as they now stand are so palpably insufficient to meet the requirements of the situation in Macedonia that it is unnecessary to examine them seriatim. At the same time, the fact that the Sultan has been induced by the events that have occurred during the autumn in the Balkan Peninsula and by other considerations to take the initiative is in itself satisfactory, particularly as among the proposals there is one for the introduction of a number of Christians into the gendarmerie. These proposals will, it is to be hoped, open the road for further propositions and suggestions from those Powers who are interested in the peace, prosperity, and well-being of the Balkan Peninsula.

The Sultan was pleased to send me word on the 7th instant that he was actively engaged in studying the reforms to be introduced into the Roumelian Provinces. In reply to His Majesty's Message, I sent the First Dragoman to the Palace to say that I had, however, noticed with regret that no Christian member had been appointed either on the Commission at the Porte or the Inspectorate, and that this seemed to me to be the more desirable that the inquiries must in the main be directed to redress the complaints of the large Christian element of the population where discontent was now a source of danger, not only to His Majesty, but to the general peace of those regions.

I added that I ventured also to urge upon His Imperial Majesty the absolute necessity of the Commission arranging to appropriate an adequate and fixed sum of money annually for the payment of the judicial and financial departments and the gendarmerie and police, for, without this, it seemed to me impossible that there should be any real improvement in the administration, and I looked with great anxiety to what might happen in the spring unless effective measures were taken before then.

His Majesty replied that the question was one which he was determined to bring to a satisfactory issue. He had already insured the regular payment of the officials, civil and military, from the provincial revenues; these were to be set aside in the first place for the payment of salaries, and only after the officials had been paid would any funds be remitted to the Central Government. Orders had been repeatedly sent to the Grand Vizier and the Valis, and a formal decision of the Council of Ministers had been drawn up and signed to the same effect. His Majesty himself had told Hussein Hilmi Pasha and Ferid Pasha that he laid special stress on this point, and that they were to see that his wishes were acted on.

With regard to the appointment of Christian officials, either on the Commission here or to accompany the Inspector, the matter had not escaped his attention, but although Nasir Pasha was the Military Assistant of Hussein Hilmi Pasha, yet, as a matter of fact, he thought it better that there should not be a Commission of Inspection, but only one Inspector-General. Moreover, there was great difficulty in

appointing a Christian, for if a Greek were named it would arouse the jealousy of the Bulgarians, and *vice versâ;* besides which there were Albanians, Vlachs, and Jews, who would want a Representative of their own.

As for the Commission, it was more in the nature of a body to expedite matters and to overcome the interminable delays of the Porte routine than to consider and suggest reforms. His Majesty did not, therefore, think a Christian official would be any great advantage, and he intended, and was determined, that the work be speedily and effectually done.

I spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the same sense two days ago. His Excellency seemed to think that the suggestion of Christian Delegates on the Commission was a good one, and he took note of it for communication to the Sultan.

No. 337.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 16.)

My Lord, *Sophia, December* 12, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 22nd and of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report that Madame Bakhmeteff, the wife of the Russian Agent, left Sophia the day before yesterday for Dubnitza and Rilo, to distribute among the refugees from Macedonia clothing and provisions bought with the 10,000 roubles subscribed for their relief by the Slav Benevolent Society. She has taken with her two Russian and two Bulgarian nurses, and a young gentleman from the Bulgarian Foreign Office, a native of the district.

M. Bakhmeteff, who is in constant telegraphic communication with his wife, tells me that she reports great distress among the refugees; the clothing is thankfully received, but the great cry is for bread; and one of the Russian sisters, who has had experience of famine work in Russia, is going to set up bakeries upon the system adopted there. Madame Bakhmeteff telegraphed that more money was urgently required. Her last message, from Kocherinovo (a village half way between Dubnitza and Rilo), stated that there were 1,500 refugees in that place and the neighbouring villages.

I asked M. Bakhmeteff if anything definite was known about the cause of the emigration. He answered (as M. Daneff, the Prime Minister, had done a few days before) that a Slav peasant will never leave his home until the utmost extremity, and it was therefore clear that outrages of different kinds had been committed. The fact was that until the 24th October, o. s. (6th November), no particular harm had been done, the Turkish troops having been kept together in central positions; but after that date, when they were scattered about the country, and quartered upon the villages in small bodies, they got out of hand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 338.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 17.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December* 14, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a communication, in French translation, which has appeared in this day's "Official Messenger" with regard to the possibility of serious complications occurring in the Balkans at an early date.

The communication states that, with a view to calming a dangerous agitation, the Imperial Government has, through the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, approached the Porte with a view to the introduction of immediate reforms in the administrative organization of Macedonia. The Imperial Government at the same time counts upon the Slav States of the Balkan Peninsula to follow the advice given to them. Russia's determination to prevent possible complications in the Balkans meets with the approval of the Powers. The Austro-Hungarian Government has already associated itself, through its Ambassador at the Porte, with the steps taken by the Imperial Government at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. SCOTT.

Inclosure in No. 338.

Extract from the "Journal de Saint-Pétersbourg" of the 1st (14th) December, 1902.

LE "Messager Officiel" publie aujourd'hui la communication suivante:—

"La situation de la Péninsule Balkanique, telle que la présentent les nouvelles qui parviennent de l'Orient Ottoman, n'exclut pas la possibilité de complications sérieuses.

"Grâce aux mesures qui ont pu être prises à temps, et en raison de la venue de la saison d'hiver, on peut compter que l'agitation en Macédoine ne s'étendra pas actuellement; toutefois, bien des indices témoignent du mécontentement croissant de la population Orthodoxe de Turquie, laquelle, sous la pression de différents Comités, semble se préparer à une insurrection générale pour le printemps prochain.

"Ces faits inquiétants ne pouvaient ne pas attirer l'attention de la Russie, dont les préoccupations constantes et traditionnelles ont en vue le sort de populations qui lui sont congénères.

"Pour mettre un terme à une agitation qui pourrait créer les complications les plus graves dans toute la Péninsule Balkanique, le Gouvernement Impérial a fait des démarches conformes auprès de la Porte; l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Constantinople a été chargé, après un examen des conditions locales, de donner son avis sur les réformes possibles à introduire d'urgence dans l'organisation administrative de la Macédoine, et de conseiller avec instance au Gouvernement Ottoman de mettre ces réformes au plus tôt en vigueur, à l'effet d'améliorer le mode d'existence de la population Orthodoxe.

"On ne saurait cependant perdre de vue que, tant que persiste dans cette province l'état de trouble actuel, donnant au Gouvernement Ottoman une base légale pour les mesures à prendre envers ses sujets insurgés, il est très malaisé pratiquement de mettre à exécution des améliorations administratives quelconques et de garantir complètement la population contre les moyens très durs de répression dont usent les autorités locales.

"C'est pourquoi la première et la principale condition du succès à cet égard est la cessation des troubles que fomentent les Comités Macédoniens, lesquels, sans atteindre le but patriotique allégué par eux, détournent seulement les habitants de cette contrée de leurs occupations pacifiques et les exposent à toutes les conséquences pénibles d'entraînements funestes.

"Le Gouvernement Impérial a eu plus d'une fois l'occasion de faire connaître sa manière de voir dans la question Macédonienne, en blâmant les tentatives de tout genre des nationalités Slaves s'efforçant de changer par des moyens violents l'ordre de choses établi dans la Péninsule et qui est garanti par des Traités Internationaux. Le Gouvernement Impérial continue à maintenir cette même manière de voir. C'est pourquoi il a jugé nécessaire de confirmer à nouveau les conseils bienveillants qu'il a donnés aux Gouvernements Serbe et Bulgare, en faisant valoir la nécessité pour eux de s'opposer, dans leur propre intérêt, à toute agitation dangereuse, et de concourir de toute manière au maintien de la tranquillité dans la Péninsule.

"Le Gouvernement Impérial est en droit de compter que les États Slavs qui doivent leur libération et leur existence autonome aux sacrifices et au désintéressement de la Russie, suivront les conseils qui leur sont donnés, étant fermement assurés que les démarches faites par la volonté souveraine de Sa Majesté l'Empereur atteindront le but qu'elles ont en vue.

"La décision inébranlable de la Russie de prévenir des complications possibles dans la Péninsule des Balkans rencontre un complet assentiment de la part des autres Puissances. Le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois n'a pas tardé à chargé son Représentant à Constantinople de s'associer, après un échange de vues avec l'Ambassadeur de Russie, à ses démarches instantes auprès de la Porte au sujet de la nécessité d'introduire le plus tôt possible des réformes en Macédoine.

"Les efforts communs des deux Empires voisins les plus intéressés au maintien de la paix dans l'Orient Ottoman sont une conséquence directe de l'accord conclu entre eux en 1897, et dont l'action bienfaisante et l'existence même ne sont possibles qu'à la condition de l'observation la plus stricte des principes qui lui servent de base, et qui ont pour objet de ne pas admettre de changements arbitraires dans l'ordre de choses établi par les Traités dans la Péninsule des Balkans, et d'y maintenir la tranquillité si nécessaire au bien-être des populations Chrétiennes et à la conservation de la paix générale.

"Comme conclusion, le Gouvernement Impérial, qui a donné maintes preuves de son constant désir de maintenir les meilleurs rapports avec la Turquie, ne saurait

ne pas exprimer l'espoir que le Gouvernement du Sultan, en prenant les mesures nécessaires pour mettre fin à tous les actes de violence et de cruauté, appréciera la portée des démarches amicales de la Russie en faveur de la population Chrétienne de la Macédoine, dont la pacification la plus prompte est le meilleur moyen d'empêcher l'éclosion des complications les plus dangereuses pour l'Empire Ottoman."

(Translation.)

The "Official Messenger" publishes to-day the following communiqué:—

"The situation in the Balkan Peninsula, according to the news which arrives from the Ottoman Empire does not appear to exclude the possibility of serious complications.

"Thanks to the measures which have been taken in good time, and owing to the approach of winter, there is reason to hope that the agitation in Macedonia will not spread for the present; there are, however, many indications pointing to the growing discontent of the Orthodox population of Turkey, which seems, under the pressure of various Committees, to be preparing a general insurrection for the coming spring.

"These disquieting facts could not fail to attract the attention of Russia, the constant and traditional protectress of the races allied to her.

"To put an end to an agitation which might create the greatest complications throughout the whole Balkan Peninsula, the Imperial Government has made suitable representations to the Porte; the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to give his opinion, after an examination of the local conditions, as to the reforms which it would be possible to introduce immediately into the administrative organization of Macedonia, and earnestly to recommend the Ottoman Government to put these reforms into force at the earliest possible moment, with the object of improving the condition of the Orthodox population.

"The fact must not, however, be lost sight of, that so long as the present disturbed condition of the province continues, by which the Ottoman Government are given legitimate grounds for the measures taken against their rebellious subjects, there is considerable practical difficulty in putting into execution any administrative reforms, and in completely guaranteeing the population against the very harsh means of repression exercised by the local authorities.

"For this reason, the first and principal condition of success in this respect is the cessation of the disturbances fomented by the Macedonian Committees, which, without attaining the patriotic object they profess to seek, succeed only in distracting the inhabitants of these regions from their peaceful pursuits, and exposing them to all the painful consequences of such fatal agitations.

"The Imperial Government has more than once had occasion to make known the views it entertains on the Macedonian question, blaming the various attempts of the Slav nationalities to change by means of violence the established order of things in the Peninsula, guaranteed by international Treaties. The Imperial Government continues of the same opinion. For this reason, it has judged it necessary to confirm again the friendly advice which it has given to the Servian and Bulgarian Governments, making clear to them the necessity for opposing in their own interest all dangerous agitation, and for co-operating in every way in maintaining tranquillity in the Peninsula.

"The Imperial Government is justified in expecting that the Slav States, which owe their liberation and their autonomous existence to the sacrifices and disinterested action of Russia, will follow the advice given them, resting firmly assured that the steps taken by the sovereign will of His Majesty the Emperor will attain the end in view.

"The firm decision of Russia to prevent possible complications in the Balkans has met with a complete assent from the other Powers. The Austro-Hungarian Government hastened to instruct its Representative at Constantinople to associate himself, after an exchange of views with the Russian Ambassador, with the latter's pressing representations to the Porte on the subject of the necessity for introducing reforms as quickly as possible in Macedonia.

"The common efforts of the two neighbouring Empires, which are the most interested in the maintenance of peace in the Ottoman East, are a direct consequence of the understanding concluded between them in 1897, the beneficent action and very existence of which are impossible except on condition of the strictest observation of the principles which are its foundation, and which have for their object the prohibition of arbitrary changes in the order of affairs established by Treaties in the Balkan Peninsula, and the maintenance in those regions of the tranquillity which is so necessary for the well-being of the Christian populations and the preservation of general peace.

"In conclusion, the Imperial Government, which has given numerous proofs of its

constant desire to maintain the best relations with Turkey, must express the hope that the Sultan's Government, taking the necessary measures to put an end to all acts of violence and cruelty, will appreciate the object of the friendly representations of Russia in favour of the Christian population of Macedonia, the prompt pacification of which is the best means of preventing the outbreak of complications most dangerous to the Ottoman Empire."

No. 339.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 19, 1902.*

YESTERDAY, His Majesty in conversation, asked for my views on his scheme for the improvement of the administration of Macedonia (see my despatch of the 3rd December), and for my opinion on the general situation as regards that province.

I said that to give an opinion offhand on such a grave subject was a difficult matter, but that I should without hesitation advise His Majesty to hasten to appoint members of the Christian faith on both Hussein's and Ferid's Commissions.

I also suggested that investigation into the complaints against the gendarmerie and police, the reorganization of these forces, and the introduction of practical and effective reforms should be entrusted to another Commission which should partly be composed of Christian members. I described the situation as one which, failing the prompt redress of the legitimate complaints of the people, was fraught with danger to His Majesty himself and to his Empire.

After discussing at some length the best steps to be taken, His Majesty said that he would at once appoint as a member of the Commission sitting at the Porte, Alexander Caratheodori Pasha, and that he would send another Commission into the Roumelian provinces who would reorganize the gendarmerie and police, and would inquire into the abuses generally. To this Commission would be appointed Nassir Pasha and two officers of the gendarmerie section of the Ministry of War, General Blunt Pasha, and a German officer selected with care from those serving in the Turkish army.

No. 340.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1902.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram of the 19th instant in regard to Macedonia, and I entirely approve the suggestions which you made to the Sultan.

I note with much satisfaction that they have been favourably considered by His Imperial Majesty.

No. 341.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, December 13, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 3rd instant, transmitting, for my observations, a copy of a telegram from the Greek Government, dated the 14th (27th) November, on the subject of recent proceedings of Bulgarian bands in Macedonia.

The Matchoukovo incident was reported by Sir A. Biliotti in a despatch which was inclosed in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 24th November. The sequel of it is related by the Salonica correspondent of the "Times" in a letter published in the issue of the 5th instant:

"On the 18th instant (November) the priest, in whose house the 'band' which murdered the Kojabashi's family had met and deliberated, was tortured to death by Turkish officials under the supervision of the examining Magistrate, his hair and beard being plucked out, and his body seared with red-hot irons."

The Plevna incident was reported by Sir A. Biliotti in a despatch which was summarized in the inclosure to Sir N. O'Conor's despatch of the 26th November.

The repulse of a band 400 strong in the Caza of Razlog is mentioned in the same summary; but the assertion of the Greek Government that a band of that strength had succeeded in crossing the Bulgarian frontier is not believed either by me, by Mr. Vice-Consul McGregor, or by the Ottoman Commissioner. I suspect the foundation of the story to be the departure of the band of twenty-four men reported by Acting Vice-Consul Heard in a despatch of which I had the honour to forward a copy with my despatch of the 17th November; and Mr. McGregor, who shares this opinion with me, tells me he heard privately at the time from Mr. Heard that rumour had already swollen the number of the invaders to 400. It is, however, quite possible that before it encountered the Turkish troops the band may have been considerably increased by local contingents.

With regard to the Bulgarian uniform said to have been worn by several members of the band, it is very likely that pilfering goes on from the Bulgarian army clothing stores in the same way as from the magazines of ammunition; but it must be remembered that the dress affected by the Macedonian revolutionaries may easily be mistaken at a distance for the uniform of the Bulgarian soldier.

No. 342.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Sophia, December* 15, 1902.

COLONEL YANKOFF, the revolutionary leader who made his way into Greek territory when his activity in Macedonia had been brought to an end, returned to Sophia yesterday. In order to prevent demonstrations in his honour, the Government caused him to be detained some hours at the frontier, so that, instead of arriving by the midday train, he only reached Sophia in the evening. He was, nevertheless, met by a considerable crowd, which improvised a torchlight procession and escorted him to the head-quarters of the Macedonian Committee, where speeches were made from a balcony by Colonel Yankoff and General Tsoncheff, who were both enthusiastically received. The Colonel was afterwards escorted to his house by his admirers.

One of the newspapers published in the Macedonian interest announced some days ago that the leader, Doncho Slatkoff, had again crossed the frontier into Macedonia with about sixty men, in order to escape the "internement" with which he was threatened. The Ottoman Commissioner was unable to tell me whether this statement was true or not.

The same paper asserted that there were still in Macedonia some sixty bands, of from fifteen to twenty men each, prepared to maintain themselves through the winter and be ready for action in spring.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 343.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Sophia, December* 17, 1902.

SEVERAL Sophia newspapers having published a statement that twenty-four Macedonian stonemasons returning to their villages from Bulgaria with passports in order, and without arms, were slaughtered on the 25th November by Turkish troops near Barakovo, the Bulgarian Government ordered the Mayor of Dubnitsa to inquire into the matter, and he has now reported that the statement is true.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.

No. 344.

Mr. Thesiger to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, December 15, 1902.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a visit recently paid to Belgrade by Colonel Yankoff, an officer in the Bulgarian Reserve, and who was lately at the head of a considerable band of insurgents in Macedonia, was unaccompanied by any incident worth noting.

His arrival on the 12th instant attracted little attention either among the people or in the newspapers, and his departure took place two days later in consequence of a hint from the Servian Government that his presence here was not considered desirable.

M. Tcharicoff, the Russian Minister, informed me that, whatever may have been Colonel Yankoff's intentions in coming to Belgrade, he attached no political significance to his visit, as he was convinced that Servia would avoid taking any other than a perfectly legal course of action as regards Macedonia. His Excellency added that this was all the more desirable at the present moment, when there was every hope that the pressure which was being brought to bear at Constantinople would result in securing for the peasants of Macedonia, whom he acknowledged to be in the last stage of despair, a measure of security to which they had long been strangers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILFRED G. THESIGER.

No. 345.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 16, 1902.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a summary of recent events in Macedonia and Albania, as reported by His Majesty's Consular officers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 345.

Summary of Recent Events in Macedonia and Albania.

MR. FONTANA transmits a list of cases of robbery and oppression suffered by Christians at the hands of Albanians in the Vilayet of Kossovo during the months of October and November. Mr. Fontana believes the list to be authentic. It relates the following cases: On the 3rd October, 212 sheep belonging to Christians were carried off by Albanians from Stenich, Caza of Tetovo, and 60 oxen from Bresji, in the same caza, on the 9th October. On the 10th October, fourteen or fifteen Bulgarians returning from Bulgaria were robbed by a band of Albanians on the Kochana high road. On the 11th October, fourteen oxen, twenty-eight cows, and twenty-three sheep were carried off by Albanians from Otoumé, Caza of Tetovo; a Christian woman of the village, named Mitrovitsa, was wounded while trying to save her cows, and subsequently died. On the 15th October, an Albanian, named Saïd Salih, wounded a Bulgarian woman at the village of Mogila, Caza of Uskub, and drove off all the cattle of a Christian of that village. On the 18th October Albanians fired into the house of a Bulgarian of Lubantsi, Caza of Uskub, and wounded one of the inmates, a workman employed on the railway. On the 19th October, thirteen villagers of Chechinovtsi, Caza of Kochana, were robbed between Lakintsi and Stanevtsi, Caza of Koumanovo, by Albanians, who took from them seven horses and all their goods and money. On the same day another Albanian band carried off five oxen belonging to a Bulgarian of Jiviné, Caza of Koumanovo. On the 28th October a Bulgarian of Barovo, Caza of Uskub, was found murdered. The crime is believed to have been committed by his employer, a Mussulman named Hamid Aga, of Chichevo.

Vice-Consul Fontana, December 9, 1902

A zaptieh, after collecting taxes from various villages in the Caza of Uskub, ran away with the proceeds and joined a band of Albanian brigands in the Koumanovo Caza. As

he gave no receipts for the taxes thus collected, the villagers will doubtless be called upon to pay a second time.

On the 9th November, a Christian of Bresitsa, Caza of Uskub, was murdered, it is not known by whom. On the 16th November, a notorious brigand of the Caza of Tetovo, named Mouharrem, was captured in his tower after three hours' fusillade, and has been brought on to Uskub. An Albanian, named Arslan Arif Binatch, is said to be committing highway robberies in the Caza of Uskub, and another, named Ahmed Sefa, is levying blackmail on the villagers of the Chernagora district.

Sir A. Biliotti, December 9, 1902.

Pappa Christo, the priest charged with harbouring the band which committed the murders at Matchoukovo, died in prison on the 24th November, and his death is attributed to the effects of torture. Twenty-eight Bulgarians were arrested for this crime, and the priest is said to have undergone torture of a most brutal kind. The evidence is, however, conflicting, and far from conclusive either way.

Ditto, December 10, 1902.

With regard to the outrages alleged to have been committed by the Turks on Bulgarians in the Juma Bala district, Sir A. Biliotti thinks that but little destruction of property can have taken place; 2,917 families are said to have emigrated, and only 130 houses to have been burnt or destroyed; 26 Christians, including 6 women and 3 children, were murdered; but considering the fact that at least 350 Turkish soldiers had been killed by the revolutionaries, Sir A. Biliotti is of opinion that the Turks, military or civil, in Juma Bala can scarcely be stigmatized as having been ferocious on the scale implied in the "Times" of the 5th December. The alleged torturing of the priest, Pappa Christo, is not established, and there is as much evidence against it as for it, one credible informant having told Sir A. Biliotti that he had seen the corpse "with the long beard," which had, therefore, not been plucked out, as stated by Reuter's agent.

Annex.

Extract from the "Times" of December 5, 1902.

THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION.—There can be no doubt that the revolutionary bands have at last succeeded in provoking an outbreak of Turkish ferocity on a very considerable scale. In the Djuma-i-bala district alone, eighteen villages have been plundered and partly burned. The Matchoukovo affair, in which a Bulgarian band murdered three women and two men, has now had its sequel. On the 18th instant, the priest in whose house the band had met and deliberated, was tortured to death by Turkish officials, under the supervision of the Examining Magistrate, his hair and beard being plucked out, and his body seared with red-hot irons. The Vali of Salonica, acting on instructions from Constantinople, has refused the inquiry demanded by the Archimandrite. An encounter is reported to have taken place at Podèsta, near Castoria, on the 22nd instant. The Turks are said to have lost twenty-five killed and wounded, and the Bulgarians sixteen killed, wounded, and prisoners.

Salonica, November 30, 1902.

No. 346.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 16, 1902.

IN its issue of the 5th instant, the "Times" printed a communication from Salonica that "the revolutionary bands have at last succeeded in provoking an outburst of Turkish ferocity on a very considerable scale," stating in proof that in the Djuma-i-bala district eighteen villages had been destroyed, and that a priest (named Pappa Christo) had been tortured to death in prison at Ghevgheli for having harboured in his house the Bulgarian band which was guilty of the murder of the Greek family at Matchoukovo. I drew the attention of His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica to these statements, and requested him to furnish me with any information which he could gather, and I have now the honour to transmit copies of two despatches from him on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 346.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, December* 9, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 19th November, in which I reported the wholesale murder by a Bulgarian band, under more than usually atrocious circumstances, of a Greek family at Matchoukovo, in the Caza of Ghevgheli, a number of Bulgarians were arrested, among whom the Bulgarian priest Christo, who was accused of harbouring the band a day or two before the crime.

Pappa Christo died in prison, after a fortnight's detention, on the 24th ultimo, and his death is attributed to the effects of tortures inflicted on him while in custody.

From information received from one of the principal men of Ghevgheli, whom I called down, I learned that twenty-eight Bulgarians had been arrested, of whom seventeen had been released up to date (29th November), and that the priest was said to have been mercilessly beaten, the hairs of his head and beard pulled out one by one, his feet and the flesh of his back burnt with red-hot irons, and that his neck bore the blue mark of a rope, from which had been hung a bucket full of dung. But he only spoke from hearsay, neither he nor anyone else having dared to go and see the corpse, for fear of the Turks.

The Exarchist Archimandrite of Ghevgheli addressed a petition to the Vali, asking him for a *post-mortem* examination of the corpse by a commission of impartial doctors from Salonica, which was refused; a second one producing no better results, the Archimandrite telegraphed to the Palace and to the Exarchate, complaining of the Vali's refusal.

Hassan Fehmi Pasha told me that an army doctor (a Moslem) and the deceased's medical man, a Greek, said to be the doctor of the Bulgarian community also, had made a *post-mortem* examination, and had reported death to have been due to a chronic disease from which the deceased had suffered for two years, and that a second examination was unnecessary.

I learn from a Greek source that the body was delivered to the Bulgarians in broad daylight, on a Mejliss day, and this would not have been done if the body had borne marks of torture, of which the pulling out of the beard, at least, would have been plain to any one.

But, notwithstanding the declarations of the Vali and of non-Bulgarian native Christians, the rest of the public are convinced that the man died of the tortures, and I understand that several, if not all, of my colleagues have sent translations of the Archimandrite's petitions to their Embassies.

This is one of the numerous cases in which the presence of an European Judicial Inspector would have cleared up the allegations against the local authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 346.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, December* 10, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to reply to your Excellency's telegram of yesterday on the subject of the Turkish atrocities published in the "Times" of the 5th December.

The wording of the report makes it appear as if the incidents had taken place quite recently, and had no connection with other events, whereas they relate to the results of the fighting in the Cazas of Melnik and Djuma Bala last September and October, on which I am sending your Excellency an exhaustive Report, drawn up with the greatest care and impartiality from all manner of sources, including such Bulgarians as were able to give evidence. This Report has undergone considerable delay owing to the difficulties besetting its completion, and in the meanwhile I have the honour to furnish your Excellency with some important details connected with the subject of the "Times" report.

It is the opinion of all strangers who were in the Mutessariflik of Serres during, or who visited the affected districts immediately after, the outbreak, that there was more than sufficient cause to provoke Turkish ferocity, and that it is astonishing that it was not roused to any considerable extent.

The outbreak began by the massacre in Melnik and Djuma Bala of thirty-one

non-fighting Moslems. Then came the Cressna affair, which, whatever may have been said to the contrary, I believe to have cost the Turks nearly half a battalion, as reported at first by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Theodorides, contradicted subsequently to him and myself by the Turkish authorities alone, and confirmed in the end by all our Christian informants. A special messenger sent by me to the Sandjak of Serres, reported the Turkish losses to have amounted to 250, to which should be added 100 more mentioned as having been annihilated in an ambush on the heights above Yeni Keui, just below Cressna. This brings the number up to 350, and after careful consideration of all the accounts given, and especially of the formidable position which the Cressna Pass forms, and which fifty men could easily hold, as described by an American missionary, I have not the least doubt that nearly half a battalion was engaged and decimated in the attempt to force the gorge.

However much the Turkish authorities may deny the facts, the Turkish troops know exactly how matters stand, and the feelings roused in them by the destruction of their comrades in an ambush can easily be imagined.

The plundered villages are those the inhabitants of which emigrated willingly or by compulsion, and it was impossible for the fugitives to expect to find on their return in their homes exactly what they had left in them, especially since they had carried off to the mountains and left there for safety part of their belongings.

No. 347.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 16, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, containing his views on the reforms to be introduced into the administration of European Turkey.

Your Lordship will observe that Sir A. Biliotti lays great stress on the introduction of European control into the financial, judicial, and police departments in each vilayet, which he considers to be essential for the success of any scheme for the amelioration of these provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 347.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Extract.) *Salonica, December* 1, 1902.

EVERYONE is agreed that the provinces of Turkey in Europe cannot be allowed to remain in their present deplorable condition, and that immediate and adequate reforms are imperatively necessary. Nor is it only the local Christian population of all races and creeds which holds this opinion, but it is prevalent among Moslems also, and all my colleagues, as well as even Turkish officials, share it.

The unanimity on this point, however, is in striking contrast to the divergence of views on the remedy to be applied, and since the variety of the suggestions made is limited only by the number of people making and publishing them, I may be excused for submitting my own opinion on the subject in writing, as I had the honour to do verbally when I met your Excellency in Smyrna.

At no time since first the Macedonian Committees were organized has there been a movement in these provinces so extensive or so prolonged as that which broke out this year along the frontier, nor any which has shown the Turks so clearly that the Bulgarian population may be forced even against their will to act with the bands and the Christians, that unless they do act with them they are fore-doomed to ruin, if not to death, at their hands. For it is utterly impossible, under the circumstances, for the Government to completely protect them. The impossibility arises in great part from the fact that the Porte, as a Moslem Power, is not in a position to act against these Christian conspirators with the efficient severity with which a Christian Government would deal with insurrection among its subjects. Were the Porte to do so, there would be an outburst of indignation all over the world which would force it to discontinue its action. Edhem Pasha, the Commander-in-chief during the Greek war, used to tell me fifteen years ago, when he was in Crete, that

twenty-four hours would suffice him to put a stop to any rising in the island, provided that his measures were watched by one or more European officers. Without which precaution, he said, the first bullet fired by his troops against the Christians would kill him. What was true of Crete in the past is equally true of Macedonia now-a-days.

The few encounters which have taken place here and there of late, without immediate significance as they may be, prove that, notwithstanding that the Turks have displayed an energy unusual to them, the fermentation has not ceased, and there is little doubt that it will revive next spring, with perhaps greater strength. For the Bulgarian Macedonians have learnt the hard fact that whether they join the bands or whether they abstain, their ruin is certain, and the Committees will be reinforced next spring by the addition to their ranks of all those who were left destitute this year and of those who fear to suffer the same fate next.

The Vlachs were offered arms and ammunition last year by the Bulgarians, and the offer is now being extended to the Greeks, and these two races, together with the Servians, will find themselves equally constrained either to throw their lot in with the Committees or to retaliate on the Bulgarians for the violence perpetrated by them.

Should the non-Bulgarian Christians take to vindictive measures, the Moslems can scarcely be expected to abstain from a similar course; should they, however, end by joining the Bulgarians, the Moslems may be expected to adopt a self-defensive policy of massacring Christians which will leave no corner of European Turkey untouched. And even supposing that neither of these alternatives occur, on the revival of disturbances next spring many competent authorities, including the Valis, declare it doubtful whether it will be possible for the Government to restrain to the degree that it has this year succeeded in restraining the native Moslems from outrage and massacre.

It must therefore be the first and essential quality of the remedy to be applied that it should act so quietly as to avoid all uproar and so quickly as to forestall coming events, and it must, in the second place, aim at the welfare of the whole of the populations of the provinces without favour to any one race or creed. The very mention of probable reforms is enough to dissipate the excitement now prevalent all over the vilayets.

Autonomy, apart from considerations foreign to the actual administration of the country, is undoubtedly the final desideratum; but, on the one hand, to establish it would require more time than is now at the disposal of the Powers, on the other the populations of the provinces are not sufficiently developed at this moment for so long a step forwards. Autonomy would not be understood by them as it is understood in other countries, nor, in fact, would it be the same here as elsewhere.

The Moslem could not grasp the meaning of the term, and would see in it but a means adopted to put him at the mercy of the Christian; the Christian of one party would see in it but a ready means of crushing his co-religionist of another. The majority-forming race of an autonomous Macedonia Epirus, &c., would oppress the minority in a manner not practised even by the Turk, and in the unlikely eventuality of a coalition party the tables would but be turned.

Some other remedy, more immediate and less radical, should, therefore, I venture to hold, be applied, and the greatest care be taken to avoid uprooting ancient institutions and planting new ones in unprepared ground in their stead, lest the country be precipitated into a state of chaos, from which it would be impossible to extricate it for years to come.

Leaving completely aside the elaborate system of reforms drawn up by the International Commission in 1880 on the basis of Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin, there are in existence already Ottoman Laws and Regulations in quantity and of quality sufficient to govern these or any other provinces to perfection.

The present maladministration arises purely and simply from the neglect or wrong application of these laws, the greater part of which are, and remain, dead letters.

My idea, in short, is this:—

The Valis would be appointed for a fixed term of five to six years and invested with full administrative powers. The actual Government Staff, in the vilayet capitals and in the provinces, would be maintained, but increased by an addition of at least three European inspectors or advisers in the financial, judicial, and gendarmerie (police) departments of each of the four vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, Janina, and Kossovo. These twelve or more officials would be chosen from among subjects of European States other than the Great Powers, *e.g.*, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, or Norway, would be in the Ottoman service, but would receive, in case of need, the complete support of the Powers in the execution of their duty. They would form, each three in their respective vilayets, a Control Commission under the presidency of the Vali, with authority to assemble in any province for joint discussion or joint action on points of joint interest.

The result and, in my opinion, the advantage of their appointment would be the intro-

duction into a system, theoretically good, practically corrupt, of a foreign element, which would accomplish a two-fold object, viz., strengthening the hands of the Vali and inspiring with confidence public opinion, which has, not without reason, grown sceptical of the Porte's carrying out any reforms single-handed. The Government itself would derive the greatest profit from such an arrangement, for, quite apart from material advantages arising from the better administration of the country, the Commission would act, if not as a scape-goat, at least as buffer between it and the Christians to ward off from it the legion of exaggerated, if not baseless, reports with which it is now assailed on all sides.

The material advantages alluded to above which would accrue to the Government are very obvious, not the least among them being the placing of the peasants in a position to pay the taxes. At present the insecurity of the country, caused by the expense of the maintenance of the bands, and the protection of it by the gendarmes, who live on the peasants, the imprisonment on suspicion for months together of hundreds of peasants, who are thus debarred from attending to their agricultural pursuits and forced to sell their oxen, stock, &c., is reducing the country year by year to utter poverty and depriving the Government of much revenue.

I allude to those who have remained in Turkey. The following is an extract from a letter from Bulgaria, and gives an idea of the state of those who have fled :—

" It stirs one's admiration to think of the young bloods from Bulgaria running over the border at the beginning of winter, killing a few Turks, and then running back to pass the winter at their firesides in Bulgaria, while their acts become the cause of helpless villagers fleeing from their houses, and, if they can reach Bulgaria alive, selling their cattle at 20 fr. or 30 fr. a-head to sharpers, to get a little bread."

Among all the standing evils which are causing untold distress in these provinces at this moment, the system of levying the tithes and other taxes, such as the Bedeli askerie, or military, and the Temettuat, or professional tax, stands, perhaps, foremost.

The abuses, extortions, and ill-treatment which the peasants suffer at the hands of the tithe purchasers, who grow rich by robbing both the latter and the Government, are too well known to need specifying. But this I must say, that, from my experience of other parts of Turkey, the peasants of these, whether Christian or Moslem, appear to me to be even worse off. Two cases which took place this year at Karitou, in the Caza of Caterina, exemplify the extent to which ruthless extortion is pushed in these parts. Two peasants, whose crops had failed and yielded only 102 and 108 bushels of grain respectively, had to pay as tithes 48 and 56 bushels a-piece. In the absence of an official land register, it is impossible to adopt any other method of taxation in lieu of the tithe ; and the various systems which have been tried in Crete proved that the peasant in this part of the world considers himself in the end more aggrieved by innovations than by the Dime, while experience has shown in Cyprus that it is possible, with an able and honest staff, to collect the tithe in kind or in money with a minimum of vexation to the farmer and a maximum of profit to Government.

Such a staff is ready at hand and can enter on the discharge of its new duties directly it receives the mandate from the Government—a most important consideration in the present state of the country. I allude to the Ottoman Bank, or, better still, the Public Debt, which has agents in even the remotest parts of the Empire. I have always said, and I repeat now, that everyone agrees that the punctual payment of the officials, naval, military, and civil, is the first requisite ; that one of these departments should undertake to act as bankers for the payment of salaries, in guarantee for which it should collect all the taxes and the tithes, which should be realized no longer in kind, but in money only.

The losses of the farmers caused by the delay of the Government to put the tithes up to auction till it has ascertained the approximate value of the crops, by its neglect to take into consideration the difference of time in the harvesting in the different parts of the country, by the exposure of the harvested crops to bad weather and other accidents while the farmer waits for the Collector to take the tithe, is estimated in this vilayet as upwards of 20 per cent. of the produce, and this, together with a further loss occasioned to the farmer, anxious to garner his crop at any cost, in acceding to the exorbitant valuation of the Collector, results in the farmer's paying, directly or indirectly, three or four times what he should.

The present ruinous system might be partly remedied by fixing separate dates for the sale of the tithe of each vilayet and of those of the different zones of the vilayet. Such an innovation, however, besides correcting only part of the evil, would entail great complications, which could be avoided with great benefit to the agriculturist by levying the tithes no longer in kind but in money, on the basis of an average of the sums realized by its sale in each caza and even village during, say, the last ten years—a calculation which would be easy to establish in one or, at most, two months.

Such a system would also be of great encouragement to the farmers, as the rate of the tithe would diminish in proportion to the increase of the produce. When the crops are ready for sale, the peasants could find the required money for the payment of the tithe with no more difficulty than they now experience in the case of the other taxes, and the Public Debt would collect the money with less difficulty than any other body.

The substitution of the Public Debt or of any other body which would undertake to advance preliminary sums for the initial expenses of the new system on the money to be raised for the means now in vogue for the realization of the tithes, besides increasing the State revenues, would deliver the agricultural class from the rapacity of the tithe speculators, and would also enable the Government to abstain from pressing, as it is now compelled to do, the poorer classes for the payment of the Bedeli askerie, &c., which have to be paid at equal rates on the first of the months of May, July, September, and November. The first payments coincide with a season at which the peasant, not yet in possession of his crops, which are not available till August, is obliged, in order to meet the demands of the Government, either to borrow the money at exorbitant rates or to sell his crops in anticipation at a very low price. This, together with the exactions of the tax-collector, leaves the peasant without means of subsistence for part of the year, especially in times of scarcity, such as the last years have been. The agricultural class will, if this be allowed to continue, fall at last into a state of irretrievable ruin.

The present tax-collectors are not paid more regularly than other employés, and they are promised their wages in proportion to the money raised above a certain sum. Such a prospect is enough to stimulate the energies of these half-starved men to any means for the obtainment of the money.

The abolition of such a system would be welcomed from one end of European Turkey to the other with the greatest possible enthusiasm, and would by itself do more to restore tranquillity and good feeling between all races and creeds than any other measure devisable.

My object is not to establish a control over the higher officials in the provinces who, with fewer exceptions than is generally credited, are honest, able men, as, for instance, the Vali, Hassan Fehmi; the Procureur-Général, Hakki Bey, a Cretan; the Sous-Procureur, Memdouh Bey, &c., &c. That there are corrupt officials and abuses in every branch of the Services, especially in the inferior posts, which are badly and irregularly paid, no one doubts, and in posts above these lower ones, too, men are found who take advantage of their distance from head-quarters and the impossibility of control to abuse their powers.

Financial Inspectors.

Losses to the provincial treasuries are chiefly the result of the present position of the Defterdars, or Chancellors. They are often exposed to irresistible pressure; often they cannot enforce the payment of Government dues for fear of outcry from some community or from some influential individual, whether Christian, Moslem, or Jew; often sheer neglect causes deficits. In consequence, a great number of persons never pay taxes, which, in spite of the squeezing of poor and uninfluential people, results in the loss of thousands of pounds, or at least in the accumulating of long lists of unliquidated debts to the Government by people who could pay them without delay.

An European Inspector of Finance would put a stop to such irregular and detrimental practices, would be above suspicion, and would, by his mere presence, produce an immediate amelioration in this most important of all services.

A minimum sum should be set aside from the annual revenue for the naval, military, and civil requirements of each vilayet, without prejudice, however, to an increase of the expenditure, should there be an unexpected increase in the revenues. Any excess in the naval or military expenditure would have to be made good from some other source. Should a temporary scarcity of money occur, temporary reductions that might be necessary should not be made on salaries of less than £ T. 3 a-month. In the present state of affairs it would be impossible for the Government to punish its servants, gendarmes, &c., for taking bribes, or extorting money, when it does not pay them, especially since corruption, become a general evil, is very difficult to eradicate. The really surprising fact is that there are still honest officials in the subordinate ranks, and all the Valis to whom I have mentioned the subject shared my opinion that with the regular payment of the gendarmes, police, and other officials, two-thirds of the existing abuses would disappear. But such regularity is impossible without the control of a foreign Financial Inspector.

Judicial Inspectors.

The appointment of such an official of European nationality would enable the Government to put those measures into execution against the Bulgarian agitators which, though necessary, it cannot adopt, as I mentioned above. For the apprehension and punishment of those suspected and found guilty of high treason or murder of other Christians invariably bring in their train accusations by the Bulgarians, at the instigation of intriguers, against the local authorities of persecuting innocent peasants, of imprisoning innocent villagers without cause, of extortion of confessions by torture, of continued ill-treatment in prison, and, finally, of unjust condemnation. It is strange that the Greeks and other Christians do not make the same complaints, for they, too, are subject to imprisonment, &c., and it is not that they do not dare to, for they complain frequently of being kept months, if not years, in prison without trial.

In most of the cases of alleged ill-treatment by Turkish officials of Bulgarians, to which I have called the Vali's attention, he has made inquiries. The reports handed in have only afforded a fresh grievance against the authorities by refuting the Bulgarian allegations.

I feel sure that the Vali does not pervert the truth. It is against his interest to do so; but he may be misled. Whatever his intentions, however, or however accurate the Turkish reports, no Bulgarian, and perhaps few other Christians, will accept them as representing the whole or exact truth, whereas the report of a European official would find general credence. And if the rumours now current concerning ill-treatment in prisons are well founded, the mere presence of the European Inspector would be sufficient to end a state of affairs which harms the Government itself.

Gendarmes and Police Inspectors.

I reported at length in my despatch of the 14th October last on the defects of the existing gendarmerie, which are such as to inspire the population with fear rather than confidence. This feeling is so strong, and the protection afforded by the gendarmes to the Christians so questionable, that I was induced to suggest that they should, *till the* present crisis was over, be put under the orders of the military authorities, whose behaviour has been excellent, and has inspired the population with great confidence in them, and whose presence in the disturbed Sandjak of Salonica was sufficient to restore order. The Albanians, whether Gheghs or Tosks, or Christians, especially natives of Khimarra, who formed a very efficient corps in the Ionian Islands when under British protection, are men of fine physique and well known for their absolute fidelity to their employers, but they lack discipline and training as a body, and they are not paid.

This was very much the case with the Cretan gendarmerie, which has been transformed from a wild horde of undisciplined men into a really first-class corps by the presence of a few foreign officers and regular pay.

There is no reason to suppose that what succeeded so well in Crete should not succeed as well in these provinces. In any case, the matter is of such vital importance to these latter, and the remedy is so easy of application, that it is worth trying.

I may say, in conclusion, that those of the leading natives of the country to whom I have broached the subject of this despatch fully agreed with, where they did not anticipate, its contents. A native explained the position of the Christian population in the following words: "If only the bands would not come, we could get along. But when they come, to harbour and help them exposes to great danger from the Government; and not to harbour and help them exposes to far greater danger from them. What the poor villagers are to do, God only knows." With reforms the bands would disappear.

No. 348.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 22.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 17, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, containing an interesting account

of the insurrectionary movement in the Serres district of Macedonia during September and October.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 348.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, December* 9, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to transcribe herewith, for your Excellency's information, the contents of a report drawn up by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Theodorides on information furnished to him by the messenger whom I had authorized him to send up-country to make thorough inquiries into the events which had taken place, on which I sent him a series of questions.

The information which was collected on the spot as far as restricted communications would allow in those days by a man whom I have employed on such errands at different times and that which was given me by an European and impartial witness agree on the whole with that contained in Mr. Theodorides' report. I have added to the latter a few details obtained from other sources, including Bulgarian, and I believe that it forms as complete a record of the insurrectionary movement in the Mutessariflik of Serres last September and October as thorough and conscientious investigation can procure. I regret that the difficulties besetting such inquiries should have caused a delay in the dispatch of the report.

Since the annexation of Roumelia to Bulgaria and the granting of Berats to Bulgarian Archbishops in Macedonia, a movement has sprung up in the interior of this province with the view of preparing the ground for an universal rising to free the country from the maladministration of the Turks. The Macedonian Committees were formed for this purpose to work on the one hand by means of schools under the Exarchate at Constantinople at rousing a national spirit among the villagers and withdrawing them from their allegiance to the Patriarchate, on the other by means of bands sent out during the summer to attract by promises or force by threats, disregarding all obstacles those villagers with whom other had failed.

Proselytism and terrorism were the means by which they sought to utterly destroy all tranquillity and to reduce the inhabitants of the district to such complete misery as would force them to fall in with their revolutionary ideas. The priests and the schoolmasters, working with the daily increasing bands at their backs, instilled into the minds of the peasants that they must look for relief to Bulgaria and prepare for the great struggle which should give liberty to their children. Little by little they removed all those, who, faithful to the Patriarchate, refused their allegiance, and in the Sandjak of Serres alone over 100 Greeks, Vlachs, and Orthodox Bulgarians fell victims to their vengeance and cruelty.

This sandjak, which covers over 11,000 square miles, consists of eight cazas, as follows:—

	Turks.	Greeks.	Bulgarians.	Total
Djuma Bala	6,100	1,500	13,416	21,016
Razlog	14,681	..	16,691	31,372
Melnik	5,908	5.784	16,000	27,692
Petritch	11,994	3,714	12,000	27,708
Nevrocop	56,761	6,590	23,000	86,351
Demir-Hissar	17,789	10,000	20,286	48,075
Serres	17,145	50,321	7,000	74,466
Zihna	5,710	29,000	1,610	36,320
Total	136,088	106,909	110,003	353,000

It is in the first four of these cazas, where the Exarchists are in the majority, that the Committees play their chief part. The mountainous country, beginning at the frontier, with the Malash Dagh in the west, the Perim Dagh and the Boz Dagh in the east, and the Balesh Dagh in the south, and running as far as the Demir-Hissar, facilitates their incursions into Turkish territory. The River Strymon (or Struma), which has its source in Bulgaria, flows through the defile of Cressna, between Melnik and Petritch to the station of Demir-Hissar on the Salonica–Constantinople Railway, and watering the plain of Serres falls into the Ægean Sea at the Gulf of Orfano.

The Committees, then, have succeeded by means of their agents, the schoolmasters, and priests during the year, and of the bands and the terror these inspire during the summer, in withdrawing from the Patriarchate nearly all the villages of Djuma Bala and Razlog and most of the villages of Melnik, Petritch, and Nevrocop. By an unhappy coincidence, the inferiority of the crops of the last two years has combined with the exactions of the famished tax collectors, whose remuneration depends on the amount of money they raise, to greatly facilitate the work of the Committees. The weight of the taxes and of Turkish maladministration thus fell yet more heavily on the peasantry, which was furnished with a further inducement for throwing itself into the arms of the Committees, which have succeeded in so compromising it through Sub-Committees as to render it impossible for it to withdraw.

The first phase being passed, the Central Committee entered on the second, *i.e.*, the acquisition of arms and ammunition, so that at a given signal the villagers supplied with them could face the troops and proclaim a revolution. This was attempted seven years ago, but the population not being fully armed did not take part in it, and the raiders were completely routed. For the last four years, however, bands have been crossing and recrossing the frontier, importing arms and ammunition, and little by little they have accumulated large quantities, which they have distributed among the Exarchist villages. The military cordons at the frontier were quite insufficient and the sentries so careless as to obviate any risks to the bands. By mountain paths over the Singel and the other above-mentioned Daghs they managed to supply all the villages which had accepted their ideas in the Cazas of Melnik, Petritch, Djuma Bala, and Razlog, and some in the Cazas of Nevrocop and Demir-Hissar with rifles, while the authorities looked on passive for fear of raising a storm.

With their preparations as complete as they were, it was only the split between the Tzontcheff and Sarafoff Committees which prevented the disturbances last summer from having much more serious consequences. The whole of the Sarafoff party abstained from action, and with it the Caza of Razlog, which was said to be the best armed of any, the only districts really concerned being those of Djuma Bala and Melnik.

Although the approach of the storm had been felt long before it broke, the local military authorities took no measures to cope with it, a fact which contributed largely to the number of villages which took part in the rising organized by the Committees in Bulgaria. There were no troops to stop the entry of the invaders, nor to check those villages which were inclined to join them, nor to protect those which were not, and which in the end, found themselves obliged to flee from their homes.

The number of invaders did not exceed 500. Lieutenant-Colonel Nikoloff, of the Bulgarian Reserve, directed operations with Rizoff and 250 to 270 men in Djuma Bala, the notorious brigand Dontcho and Stoyanoff with 170 in the districts of Melnik and Petritch, and the ex-brigand Alexi with 70 to 100 in the district of Poroia. Later in the season, General Tzontcheff came over as Inspector-General.

The signal for the rising was given at the village of Troskovo, in the Caza of Djouma Bala, where a Turk of Simitli was killed; and on the troops coming up, an encounter took place, 13 Bulgarians were wounded, 6 soldiers killed, and 20 wounded. Immediately after this, the Chief Dontcho proceeded to the Cressna Pass, murdered at Hailedji Mahallesi an employé of the Public Debt and a gendarme, and ordered the Moslems of the village of Babiak, who were working on the road, to cease their work, and on their firing at the band, fifteen of them were killed, the rest escaping to warn the post guarding the bridge at Brestnitza. One hundred soldiers thereupon took up a position in the Church of Klissa Mahalessi, and after an eight hours' fight, forced the band to retreat; the latter not losing a man, while the troops lost fifteen killed and twenty-five wounded.

The troops then entered the village of Metchkoul, where they killed two peasants, one of whom they mutilated.

In the meantime, other insurgents entered Djeleznitza, where they killed a peasant, from Simitli, and Sarbinovo, where they killed seven tithe purchasers and an official of the Public Debt, all Moslems. But on the arrival of reinforcements, which started in hot pursuit, the bands fled, leaving behind them arms, ammunition, dynamite bombs, and all that they could not carry easily with them.

On the 11th November began the engagement of the Cressna Pass, which, according to Mr. Theodorides, lasted eight hours, and according to the Bulgarians, three days

Mr. Theodorides reported, on information received at first, that half a battalion had been annihilated at this pass, but like myself, was later told that the fight had not been as severe as had been supposed. The report, however, of my messsenger confirmed Mr. Theodorides' first news, and states that the fight lasted three days, and that the number of the casualties on the Turkish side amounted to 250, while the Bulgarians

without giving actual numbers, also say that the fight lasted three days, and that the Turks lost very heavily.

In any case, the following description given me by an American missionary, who knows the locality well, shows that a fight lasting, if only eight hours in such a place, may well have played terrible havoc with the Turkish troops, which were led into an ambush, while, I believe, trying to outflank the enemy. The wonder is that they were able to dislodge him before the arrival of reinforcements and artillery, for which the Bulgarians did not wait, but retired on to the Perim Dagh.

The Missionary says:—

"You ask for a description of the road or pass near Cressna. The last time I passed over it was in a carriage with Miss E. M. Stone, going from Djuma Bala to the Demir-Hissar station. The road was then (in the spring of 1899) macadamized from Djouma, south-east, along the Strouma River for about 40 miles. It is one of the best roads in Turkey. I remember especially the part near Cressna. There, one could easily imagine oneself in Switzerland. The rushing torrent runs far below on the left (as you journey south). The bank from the road to the water is very steep, and in fact the road overhangs, in places so low, that a wall has been built to prevent travellers from going over. On the other hand, the bank above the road is equally steep, the mountain towering high over it. A band of fifty men hidden behind trees and rocks above the road, opening fire suddenly on an unsuspected body of troops marching along the highway, might inflict terrible slaughter in a few minutes. For the troops to charge up the steep hill in the face of a hot fire at an unseen enemy would be very difficult, even if the attack did not leave them too demoralized to think of it. If the place were rightly chosen, the attempt to screen themselves below the road would mean to fall into the river hundreds of feet below. The only chance for life would be to turn tail and run."

The following extract from a letter from another foreigner also tends to throw some light on the question of the Turkish losses:—

"As to the previous affair in the Djuma Bala and Cressna region, I did not get anything that was new, I fear. In one of the first encounters in a village on the hills above Novo Selo (Yeni Keui), the Turkish troops seem to have been led into an ambush by the Bulgarian guide. When near enough to the insurgent band he ran to their side and firing began. It is said that a large part of the troops were killed in this affray. If there were 100, only five or six were said to have escaped, I believe. The village where there was a two or three days' fight, was called Vlahi, which is close to Cressna."

Of the other few and unimportant engagements which have taken place since, and of which I give a list below, there is little to say excepting that the bands fled after firing a few volleys at the troops (which accounts for the fewness of the casualties among these latter), concentrating all their energies on getting back across the frontier and deserting the unhappy peasants whom they had forced to leave all that they possessed and whom they now left to the utmost misery. From that moment, the majority of those peasants who had fled to Bulgaria, began, trusting to the Sultan's Proclamation of amnesty, to return:—

Date.	Name of Village.	Killed and Wounded.
Oct. 4	Troskovo, Djuma Bala	6 soldiers killed, 20 wounded; 13 Bulgarians wounded.
„ 5	Djeleznitza, „	36 Bulgarians and 1 soldier killed, 1 soldier wounded.
„ 22	„ „	18 Bulgarians and 3 Moslem workmen killed; many Bulgarians wounded; losses among troops unknown.
, 15	Sarbinovo	
	N.B.—These three villages suffered severely owing to the fights taking place actually within them. In the other cases the fighting occurred in the vicinity of the respective villages.	
„ 13	Goremi (between Djouma Bala and Petritch)	The Bulgarians sustained heavy losses.
„ 15	Klissa, Melnik	
„ 23	Papa Tzair (Perin), Nevrocop ..	5 Bulgarians and 8 soldiers killed, and 6 Bulgarians wounded.
„ 24	Gornitza, Nevrocop	Bulgarian losses unknown; 6 soldiers killed, 3 wounded.
Nov. 4	Bistritza, Djouma Bala	Results unknown; the Bulgarians crossed to Bulgaria with General Tzontcheff, wounded, and have not yet returned.

The encounters at Papa Tzair and Gornitza took place under the leadership of Doncho and Stoyanoff, who, passing through Bresdovo (Menlik), followed the gorge of the Singel Dagh, reaching the Perim Dagh, whence Doncho crossed to Bulgaria on the 10th November with 70 or 80 companions.

The following is a complete list of the villages which fled. Of the 22 given 18 are mentioned in Mr. Theodorides' report and the other 4 were given to me by the Vali, thus bringing the total up to the number mentioned by Mr. Theodorides at the first outbreak.

Name of Village.	Houses.	
Bistritza, Djuma Bala	188	(N.B.—The statistics are taken from the "Cartes Ethnographiques des Vilayets de Salonique, Cossovo, et Monastir," published by the "Institut Cartographique" of Sophia.)
Djeleznitza, „	171	
Sarbinovo, „	321	
Selista, „	107	
Lissia, „	100	
Gradovo, „	236	
Dranovo, „	101	
Dranovo, „	104	
Troskovo, „	99	
Doukatich, „	13	
Mouchtantza, „	36	
Padech, „	222	
Lechko, „	215	
Gabrovo, „	95	
Kirdjalar (Kirdjevo)	25	
Total in Djuma	2,033	
Metchkoul, Melnik..	110	
Cressna, „	115	
Klissa, „	110	
Vlahi, „	239	
Total in Melnik	574	
Gornevo, Petritch	104	
Ribnitza, „	57	
Tzaparevo, „	139	
Total in Petritch	300	
Grand total	2,907	

Of the inhabitants of Bistritza which emigrated *en masse* to Bulgaria no one seems to have returned as yet, and so with the majority of the priests and schoolmasters and a few young men who had compromised themselves. With these exceptions the peasants have returned to their homes.

A glance at the accompanying map will show that of the 63 purely Bulgarian villages in Melnik and Djuma Bala only 19 moved, and those all between the Cressna Pass and the Bulgarian frontier, where the bands had a free field and could have made a serious stand had the population of the other Bulgarian villages of these two districts joined in the rebellion. This abstention on their part induces me to believe Mr. Theodorides correct, when he maintains that not a single village joined in the movement of its own accord.

The emigration of the three villages in the Caza of Petritch was caused by the murder of three Moslems at Tzaparevo, as in the case of Sborsko, which was looted on the villagers fleeing, and Toushoun, which was saved from a similar fate by the timely arrival of the troops, and had nothing to do with the main or Cressna movement.

The incursion of 400 Bulgarians on the 11th ultimo, the majority of whom wore the Bulgarian military uniform and were armed with Mannlichers, and were repulsed with great loss at Godlevo, was another solitary action quite independent of the main plan. But although the inhabitants of this caza had taken no part whatever in the movement, this incursion roused the suspicion of the Turks, who endeavoured by terrible floggings to make them surrender arms which they have not got. The Vali to whom I mentioned these facts immediately gave orders respecting them.

On the whole, a very small number of peasants actually took part in the fights; the majority followed their wives and children to the mountains to protect them.

The following is a Return of the non-fighting Christians murdered and the villages burnt and pillaged in the Sandjak of Serres by soldiers, gendarmes, and native Moslems:—

Name of Village.	Number of Killed.	Houses Burnt.
Metchkoul	2 men	
Padech	3 men 1 woman	15 houses burnt.
Djeleznitza	3 men	
Paporaglana	3 „	
Gornevo	..	About 25 houses burnt.
Tzaparevo	..	„ 15 „
Troskovo	..	„ 25 „

At Bistritza the very small monastery of St. Jean, in which some of the band had intrenched themselves during the fight in the village was destroyed; the two monks who alone lived in it followed the band to Bulgaria.

Sarbinovo: 6 men, 5 women, 3 children killed, murdered, it is said, in revenge for the murder of 10 Moslems from the village of Kroupnik, 50 houses were burnt, and some women and girls outraged (the only case come to my notice), and much cattle lifted.

Most of the murders, &c., were committed by the Albanians of the Kiuprulu Redifs, and many more would have occurred had not the officers, who seem to have behaved well throughout, restrained their men as far as possible, and had not the population emigrated.

I learned from a source other than Mr. Theodorides, that four Bulgarians returning to Razlog from Roumania *viâ* Djuma Bala accompanied by a muleteer from Sophia, were robbed and bayonetted towards the middle of October, by the soldiers stationed at the guard-house near the Bulgarian frontier. I brought this crime to the notice of the Vali, for his information.

The number of non-fighting native Moslems killed by the Bulgarians is thirty-one.

Mr. Theodorides is of opinion that not one single village took part willingly in the movement or emigrated of its own initiative. They were all induced to by promises, threats, and even murder by the promoters of the movement, who gave them to understand that they were acting in concert with Bulgaria, backed by Russia, with a view to freeing Macedonia. When these promises failed in their intended effect the bands held over the peasants' head the destruction of their homes and the abduction of their wives and children, and in cases of persistent refusal recourse was had to murder, as Doncho murdered Donkas, of the village of Bousdovo, in the Caza of Melnik, as another chief murdered the Khodja Bashis of Startziovo and Igralichta, in the Caza of Petritch. Other individuals, as I have reported frequently, have perished for the same reason.

The reinforcements sent were:—

2 battalions of infantry from Salonica;
5 „ „ „ „ Serres;
1 battalion „ „ „ Drama;
1 „ „ „ „ Uskub;
1 battery of 6 mountain guns from Serres.

The infantry is all Redifs and they are in a state of great discontent, being allowed neither to fight nor to plunder, nor to go home. Quite apart from the discomforts of their present circumstances, they have to look forward to neglected homes and neglected business and consequent poverty. Complaints are even now coming in concerning the Albanian Redifs. The outlook for the spring, should troubles revive on an important scale, is not promising, and affairs will not go off as smoothly as they did this year.

Mr. Theodorides sums up by saying that, though the attempt of the Committees failed this time, the future looks very black, since not only are the ancient causes of discontent, Turkish maladministration in every shape and form, and the workings of the Committees, present, but this year's ruin will, in the case of the great majority of the peasants, mean next year's revolt.

Even the Moslem population is becoming anxious, for it too fully understands the drift of the action of the Committees, so to force the situation as to drag Bulgaria into a war with Turkey, accompanied in the interior by mutual massacres.

Should no attempt be made to reform the administration—judicial, financial and

police—which even the Moslems are now desiring, the peasants, already reduced to a state approaching utter destitution, will develop into bands of reckless desperadoes, whom it will need but a touch to plunge into the very worst excesses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 348.

Sketch Map.

No. 349.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 22.)

My Lord, *Vienna, December* 17, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Count Lamsdorff, on leaving the Crimea, will pay a short visit to Vienna before returning to St. Petersburgh, and I understand that he is expected to arrive here about the 28th instant.

His Excellency has not been at Vienna since his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and it is, therefore, only natural that he should, as his predecessors have usually done, take an opportunity of visiting the Austrian capital in order to pay his respects to the Emperor Francis Joseph and confer with the Foreign Minister, though it is possible, no doubt, that the unsettled state of the Balkans may not be unconnected with the visit taking place at the present moment.

The Vienna press welcomes Count Lamsdorff's approaching arrival in cordial terms, and regards it as a proof of the continuance of the understanding come to between the two Empires in 1897, which has worked so well, and from which further good results are hoped for in regard to the introduction of reforms in Macedonia. Expression is also given to the opinion that the two Foreign Ministers will have much to confer on respecting questions of commercial policy, in view of the adoption by the Reichstag at Berlin of the new German Tariff, the excessive duties of which will be mainly injurious to the agricultural produce of Russia and Austria-Hungary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 350.

Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 23.)

(Extract.) *Sophia, December* 18, 1902.

I AM told by M. Bakhmeteff, the Russian Agent, that Count Lamsdorff will come to Sophia to-morrow week, after stopping at Belgrade on the way.

No. 351.

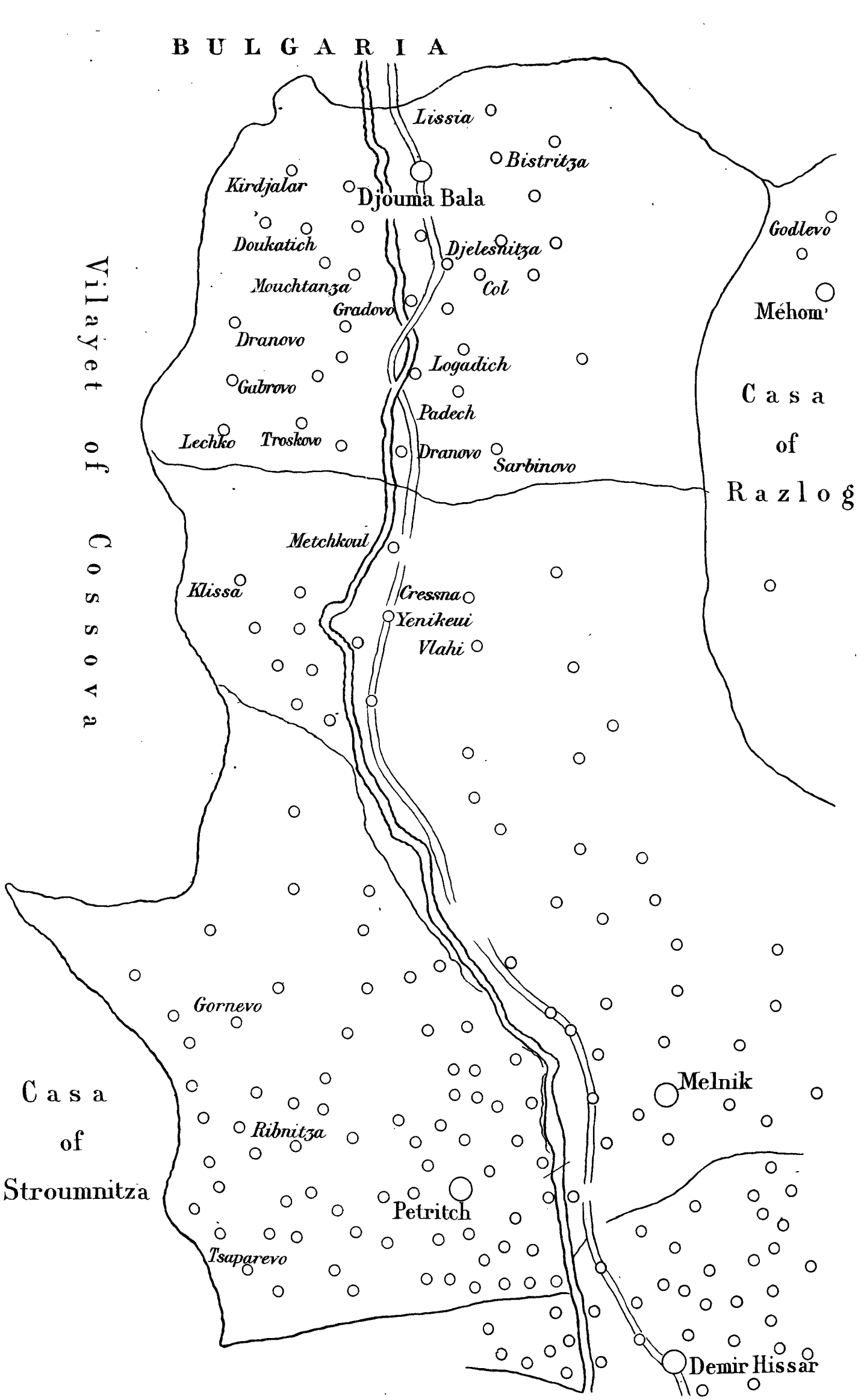
Mr. Elliot to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 29.)

My Lord, *Sophia, December* 25, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of letters which I have received from American missionaries at Samokov, to whom I wrote that, having heard that a number of refugees from the Razlog district had arrived at Samokov and the neighbourhood, and that among them there was a considerable proportion of Protestants, I should be grateful for being allowed to see any statement from them as to the causes of their leaving their homes, the treatment they had received, &c., if any such had been taken down.

The letters confirm the fact of cruelty having been practised in the Razlog district during the search for arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. ELLIOT.


BULGARIA
Lissia
Bistritza
Kirdjalar
Djouma Bala
Godlevo
Doukatich
Djelesnitza
Mouchtanza
Col
Méhom
Gradovo
Dranovo
Logadich
Gabrovo
Padech
Lechko
Troskovo
Dranovo
Sarbinovo
Casa of Razlog
Vilayet of Cossova
Metchkoul
Klissa
Cressna
Yenikeui
Vlahi
Gornevo
Melnik
Casa of Stroumnitza
Ribnitza
Petritch
Tsaparevo
Demir Hissar

Inclosure 1 in No. 351.

Rev. J. F. Clarke to Mr. Elliot.

(Extract.) *Samokov, December* 23, 1902.

ON my return from absence of a few days your letter of the 20th instant was handed to me. Dr. Haskell removed to Philippopoli last September, which is to be his residence for the future.

I cannot tell whether any other one has answered the letter, but will give some facts.

The father of one of our students, whom I have known for many years, a Protestant, arrived here to-day with two other Protestants and a few Pravoslavs (Orthodox): he left his home in Mehomia, district of Razlog, on the 4th December, and has been at the Rilo Monastery, at which place, as he reports, there are about 400 refugees, nearly all men. A few women and children have braved the bleak winds and deep snows, and have also reached the monastery. The immediate "cause of their leaving their homes" are the incursions of the bands from Bulgaria which have aroused the Turks, who know that guns have been brought into Macedonia, to seek them by violence. A large part of the able men have left their home from fears of beatings. Some have been mercilessly beaten, and now all are afraid. Among the first to flee were the men of Dobrinishte (about 4 miles south-east of Bansko).

Some of the women were beaten, and delivered up the guns which had been secreted in that place. It was reported that about 50 were secured in Dobrinishte, 55 in Eleshnitsa, and others in other villages. Those coming to-day say that about half of the above guns were from those secreted, and others bought of the Pomaks or Babyaks, as there seemed no probability of escaping great suffering except to furnish the required gun.

The women and children live in fear. It is said that some have been violated, and quite a number severely beaten, in order to secure hidden weapons. The leading men in Bansko were imprisoned for a time, but let out for a few days that they might get the people of Bansko to give up the guns which they were supposed to have secreted. Two or three of these were Protestants. One immediately fled to Rilo.

Of those who came to-day I have quite well known two for many years. The father and the grandfather of one of these were both killed on mere pretexts years ago. He reports that a band of roughs has recently been formed among the Turks, whose depredations are much feared. There is much reason to fear that there will be be much suffering in all the Razlog district this winter.

We can probably find lodging room for those Protestants who may come here, but there are some who very much need food and clothing and blankets. The work about our premises is done by our students, some of whom could not remain but for what they earn. Should there be need I may write you again, and ask aid from Mme. Bakhmeteff. I think that some forty of these refugees have passed through Samokov, but nearly all have gone on to Sophia or elsewhere.

Inclosure 2 in No. 351.

Rev. J. W. Baird to Mr. Elliot.

My dear Mr. Elliot, *Samokov, December* 23, 1902.

YOUR letter to Dr. Haskell, who now resides at Philippopoli, was opened by me.

None of us here has made any list of the Razlog or other refugees who have arrived here the past month, nor taken down any statement made by them of any cruelties witnessed or experienced by them.

At present there is scarcely any such refugee here. After seeing that there is little chance of finding work here, they have gone to other places, chiefly, I believe, to Sophia.

As far as I know they were nearly all able-bodied men, and fled because of arms found in their houses, or because some one said something about their having something to do with revolutionary movements.

What we learned from them was mostly what they heard from others about what was done in the way of beating to compel the delivery of muskets, to disclose their hiding-place, &c.

One man told me that they put cartridges between his mother's fingers and squeezed them till she told them where the rifle was hidden in the wall of the house. This was in Dobrinishte.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) J. W. BAIRD.

No. 352.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 30.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 22, 1902.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 16th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica, reporting various outrages in Macedonia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 352.

Consul-General Sir A. Biliotti to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Salonica, December 17, 1902.*

THE following facts have been reported to me by Mr. Pissurica from Monastir:—

November 16.—Ilia and Stane, of Ivaneftsi, were murdered by Turkish begchis for facilitating the circulation of Komitajis in September last.

Eleven inhabitants of the villages round Rakinitza, three hours from Monastir, set fire to the house of Yovan, in the latter, for spying. Thirty Bulgarians have been arrested.

Three villagers of Kriveni, returning from Rezna, where they had lodged complaints against the Turkish inhabitants of Tsarisvor, were killed on the way by some of the latter on the 17th November.

On the 19th November the remnant of a band, under Andrea, ex-Secretary of Marcoff, were hemmed in at Bobista [? Padista], some minutes' distance from Castoria, by the troops, who, not knowing their number, placed villagers in front of themselves, and, thus protected, fired five houses. Three villagers and one woman were killed by the band, four Komitajis, including Andrea, and two soldiers were shot, and two wounded, while two of the band escaped.

The priest Scoytoff, representative of the Exarch at Castoria, was wounded by a Bulgarian schoolmaster, who escaped, for his lukewarmness in abetting the bands during the last months.

December 3.—Ountsia Kadrah, a Bulgarian, fired at, and missed, a Bulgarian in the employ of the police, while the latter was walking in the bazaar at Monastir with another Turkish policeman. The would-be assassin escaped by entering a Bulgarian church on one side and coming out the other. The fact that the church, closed as a rule on all but Sundays and feast days, was open, remains unexplained.

Ismail Depe and Zenil, Agas of the village of Kriveni, near Rezna, were found murdered close to the village. The corpses were horribly mutilated.

The authorities having summoned a doctor to examine bloodstains in the room of a certain house in the village; the latter was warned not to declare them to be those of human blood.

On this becoming known, five strongly suspected Bulgarians were arrested, and one of them is beginning, under the influence of the bastinado, to confess.

December 2.—Marco Caraya, a Greek, native of Monastir, a doctor of Rezna, five hours' distance from Monastir, was stabbed several times by two Komitajis, Dragan Corotseff and Tsiorla, who entered his house under pretence of consulting him. The doctor, who figured prominently in his endeavours to counteract Bulgarian intrigue, was carried to the hospital at Monastir, and the authorities are pursuing the criminals.

In reporting these incidents, Mr. Pissurica once more draws my attention to the

really extraordinary patience and self-restraint of the Moslems, who are being provoked almost beyond endurance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 353.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received December* 30.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 23, 1902.

WITH reference to my despatches of the 6th and 9th instant, I have the honour to report that the Sublime Porte has communicated to me copies of two telegrams, under date of the 6th and 19th instant, addressed by the Sultan's First Secretary and the Grand Vizier to the Valis of European Turkey, giving them instructions for the better administration of their provinces.

The telegram from Yildiz, after reminding the Governors-General that their first duty is the protection of life, honour, and property, and the maintenance of public order and security, states that complaint is, nevertheless, made of acts of violence and of the neglect of the authorities to punish the culprits. By order of the Sultan, twenty days are allowed to the authorities to bring the guilty to book, and to furnish His Imperial Majesty with a report of their action; in cases where the gendarmerie force at the disposal of the civil authorities is insufficient, the Valis are empowered to call out the Imperial troops.

The Grand Vizier's message begins with a frank avowal of the representations of the foreign Missions on behalf of the Christian population, and enjoins in general terms that their complaints must be examined and dealt with according to law; any officials who neglect their duty in this respect will be rigorously held responsible for their shortcomings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 353.

Tahsin Pasha to the Governors-General of the Vilayets of Monastir, Kossovo, Salonica, Janina, Adrianople, and Scutari.

(Télégraphique.) *Le* 19 *Décembre* (N. S.), 1902.

AINSI que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan l'a ordonné à plusieurs reprises, et qu'il est déterminé par les lois et règlements de l'Empire, les premiers devoirs des Gouverneurs-Généraux sont de protéger les biens, la vie, et l'honneur de tous dans les provinces qu'ils administrent, et de sauvegarder ainsi la sécurité et la tranquillité dans le pays. Des plaintes sont, cependant, formulées au sujet de certains actes d'agression et de la négligence dont les autorités Impériales feraient preuve vis-à-vis des auteurs de ces méfaits.

Cet état de choses est contraire tant aux devoirs essentiels des Valis qu'aux prescriptions des Iradés Impériaux. Aussi, d'après un Ordre formel de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, un délai de vingt jours vous est-il accordé pour que vous fassiez arrêter pendant ce délai tous les individus qui ont commis des délits ou des crimes dans la province, et leur appliquer les prescriptions de la loi, et que vous soumettiez aux pieds du Trône Impérial le résultat des mesures que vous auriez prises en exécution de cet Ordre Impérial. Il faut que tous les fonctionnaires sachent que toute attitude contraire entraînera leur révocation et une grande responsabilité, et qu'ils travaillent par conséquent d'une manière sérieuse à assurer le résultat désiré. Notre Auguste Maître ordonne, en outre, que si, en pareil cas, le nombre des gendarmes n'étant pas suffisant, la nécessité de recourir aux troupes Impériales se fait sentir d'une manière absolue et réelle, les autorités militaires, sur un Acte délivré par le Vali, prêteront immédiatement l'assistance requise. Il est cependant bien entendu que les autorités Impériales, en vue de prévenir tout abus, s'abstiendront de se servir de troupes dans les affaires qui pourraient être réglées seulement par la gendarmerie.

Des communications dans le sens qui précède ont été faites au Ministère de la Guerre.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.) *December* 19 (N. S.), 1902.

IN accordance with the frequent commands of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan and the prescriptions of the laws and statutes of the Empire, the first duties of the

Governors-General are to protect the life, honour, and property of all persons within the provinces that they administer, and to insure the security and tranquillity of the country. Complaints have, however, been made of certain acts of aggression and of negligence which the Imperial authorities are said to have shown in regard to the persons guilty of these offences.

This state of affairs is opposed to the essential duties of the Valis as well as to the injunctions of the Imperial Iradés. Consequently, in accordance with a formal order from His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, a period of twenty days is allowed you, in the course of which you are to arrest all those individuals who have been guilty of crimes and offences within your province and enforce against them the provisions of the law, and you will report to His Imperial Majesty the result of the measures you have taken in execution of this Imperial Order. It is necessary that all officials should know that any contrary attitude will entail their recall and severe punishment, and that they should consequently make every effort to bring about the desired result. Our august Master further commands that if, in such cases, the number of gendarmes be found insufficient and the necessity of having recourse to the Imperial troops be felt to be absolutely imperative, the military authorities, on receipt of an order delivered by the Vali, shall immediately find the required assistance. It is, however, to be well understood that the Imperial authorities, with a view to preventing any abuse, shall abstain from availing themselves of the troops in cases which the gendarmerie would be able to deal with alone.

A communication in the above sense has been sent to the Ministry of War.

Inclosure 2 in No. 353.

The Grand Vizier to the Inspector-General and to the Governors of the Provinces of Turkey in Europe.

(Télégraphique.) *Le* 5 (18) *Décembre*, 1902.

QUELQUES Représentants étrangers viennent de nous aviser, d'une manière privée, que des actes criminels de toute nature se produisent sur certains points de votre province, sous les yeux mêmes des fonctionnaires locaux, qui font semblant de les ignorer.

Les premiers désirs de l'autorité sont d'assurer et de maintenir dans les provinces la confiance et la tranquillité, d'adopter toutes les dispositions efficaces propres à empêcher que des vexations et des méfaits soient commis par les uns au détriment des autres, de garantir également les biens, la vie, et l'honneur des habitants Chrétiens, d'arrêter ceux qui se livreraient à des actes contraires à ces principes et de leur infliger sans retard la punition qu'ils auraient légalement encouru et de ne rien négliger pour que les fonctionnaires, qui feraient preuve d'inattention ou de manque d'énergie dans l'accomplissement de leurs devoirs, soient immédiatement destitués et mis sous jugement.

Bien que ces recommandations vous aient été déjà adressées à maintes reprises, le fait que des plaintes continuent à être formulées de ce chef va à l'encontre des désirs du Gouvernement Impérial. Aussi a-t-il été décidé, d'une façon formelle, que dans le cas où de pareilles plaintes viendraient encore à se produire, tous les fonctionnaires, grands et petits, qui ne rempliraient pas leurs devoirs en seraient, sans exception aucune, tenus sévèrement responsables.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.) *December* 5 (18), 1902.

CERTAIN of the foreign Representatives have notified us privately that criminal acts of every kind have been rife in certain parts of your province, under the very eyes of the local officials who pretend to be ignorant of them.

The first wish of the authorities is to assure and to maintain confidence and tranquillity within the provinces; to adopt the most effectual measures to prevent the committal of injuries and misdeeds by any individuals to the hurt of their neighbours; to insure the safety of the property, lives, and honour of the Christian inhabitants, as well as of the rest; to arrest those who commit acts contrary to these principles, and inflict on them without delay the punishment to which they may be legally liable, and to do all in their power to bring about the immediate dismissal and trial of any officials who may show negligence or want of energy in the performance of their duties.

Though these injunctions have been repeatedly addressed to you, the fact that complaints continue to be made on this head is displeasing to the Imperial Government.

It has according been formally decided that in the event of similar complaints being again made, every official, great or small, without exception, who may not fulfil his duty will be called severely to account.

No. 354.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 30, 1902.

I AM informed by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Sophia that he has forwarded to your Excellency a copy of his despatch of the 25th instant in regard to cruelties practised by Turkish soldiers in the district of Razlog.

I request that you will impress upon the Porte that if excesses of this kind are permitted, the results cannot fail to be disastrous to the interests of Turkey, and that it appears desirable that prompt measures of precaution should be taken.

No. 355.

Mr. Thesiger to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 31.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, December* 27, 1902.

I HAVE the honour to report that Count Lamsdorff arrived in Belgrade on the night of Wednesday, the 24th, and was received by Colonel Antonitch, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the staff of the Russian Legation, and others. The next day he proceeded by special train to Nish, arriving there at 3 o'clock, and was received in audience by the King. In the evening there was a dinner-party at the Palace in his honour, to which about eighty guests were invited, including all the foreign Representatives accredited to the Servian Court and all the Servian Ministers and notabilities. M. Tcharicoff, the Russian Minister, on account of illness, was not able to be present, and was represented by M. Mouravieff, Secretary of Legation.

During the dinner His Majesty, in proposing the health of the Czar, made a short speech, in which he referred to the visit of Count Lamsdorff as a fresh proof of the cordial relations existing between Russia and Servia and as a special mark of favour to the Servian dynasty.

The main object of this visit was undoubtedly the discussion of the condition of affairs in Macedonia and the position of Servia with regard to future developments in that country, though it is probable that the more direct relations between Russia and Servia were also touched upon.

Count Lamsdorff proceeded to Sophia on Friday morning, and all the "Chefs de Mission" returned to Belgrade by special train at midday with the exception of Baron Heidler, the Austrian Minister, who remained behind to see something more of the town and country, though it is unlikely he will leave before having had an audience with His Majesty.

General opinion in Belgrade attaches the highest importance to the events of the last two days, and regards this visit as a proof that Russia is fully awake to the pressing danger of the present situation in Macedonia, and is determined, in conjunction with Austria, to take such steps as may be found necessary to render the promised reforms effective and to stop the continual recruiting of the insurgents from outside.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILFRED G. THESIGER.

No. 356.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 5, 1903.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 23, 1902.

HAVING heard privately a report that grievous atrocities had been committed by Turkish soldiers and officials in the district of Razlog upon the Christian inhabitants of those parts, many of whom had fled for safety across the Bulgarian frontier, I lost no time in drawing the serious attention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier to these reports. I said that I had heard

them with all the more regret, as I hoped the stringent orders of His Highness to the Valis issued last July had prevented those acts of cruelty which had been unfortunately so common in the past. It was to be feared that the discipline of the regular army was relaxed, or else that Redifs had been employed in outlying districts contrary to the assurances so frequently made by the Porte. If these reports proved to be true, the friends of Turkey would lose confidence in her ability or sincere desire to govern the country in a civilized manner, and the consequences would be very serious. An atrocity cry, if founded on even a few cases of wanton cruelty and inhumanity such as were now stated, would ring through Europe, where the terrible events of 1876 were still fresh in the memory of many people. I thought it was absolutely incumbent upon the Porte to make immediate inquiry into these reports, and to punish in an exemplary manner any guilty officials.

Tewfik Pasha said that their reports left no doubt whatsoever that many of the cruelties and acts of brutality attributed to Turkish soldiers and officials had been committed by the revolutionary bands, whose main object was to raise an outcry against Turkey which would bring on foreign intervention. This had been their policy for many years past, and the Porte had numberless instances of the worst tyranny and oppression being exercised by the Committees upon their co-religionists who were unwilling to join them.

I spoke at greater length to the Grand Vizier, and added that, if the report which had reached me was true that an Albanian regiment had been stationed at Razlog or in that neighbourhood, it would, perhaps, account for many of the reports of cruelty which were in circulation. I thought it most dangerous to employ unruly and half-disciplined Albanians on duty of this kind in so remote a district, and I hoped that the Porte would use its influence with the Minister of War to have the regiment removed if it was really there.

His Highness said, in reply, that he had done all in his power to prevent any acts of cruelty or reprisals on the part of Ottomans, being quite alive, apart from the inhumanity of such acts, to the political danger of such misdeeds, and he would lose no time in questioning the Minister of War on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 357.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received January* 5, 1903.)

(Extract.) *Constantinople, December* 31, 1902.

YOUR Lordship will perceive from my despatch of the 23rd instant that, acting in accordance with the general views of His Majesty's Government, I have already partly anticipated the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 30th December. I have further to report that, on receipt of a copy of Mr. Elliot's despatch of the 25th December to your Lordship, I again impressed upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier the day before yesterday the urgent need of taking steps to punish all persons connected with the reported cruelties.

I shall not fail, under the authority of your Lordship's present instructions, to again impress upon the Porte the grave consequences that may follow if such excesses are permitted. I have not hesitated to make very urgent and pressing representations to the Sultan on the same subject.

No. 358.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Plunkett.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 6, 1903.

I TOLD the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to-day that His Majesty's Government were watching with close interest the efforts of the Austrian and Russian Governments to arrive at an understanding with the Porte as to the introduction of an improved system of local government in Macedonia.

We recognized that Austria and Russia were specially interested in the matter, and also that they were in a specially advantageous position for dealing with it; but his Excellency would, I was sure, understand the immense importance which we attached

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to the question, and our earnest desire to contribute, so far as our opportunities permitted, to its satisfactory solution. We had instructed our Ambassador at Constantinople to impress upon the Sultan the gravity of the situation and the absolute necessity of introducing substantial measures of reform. His Excellency would find me at any time ready to discuss with him the steps which might be taken in order to promote the adoption of such measures.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 359.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 9, 1903.

I HAVE already, in my telegram of the 21st December, conveyed to your Excellency my approval of the language held by you, at a private audience with the Sultan on the 18th December, in regard to Macedonia, as reported by you in your telegram of the 19th ultimo. The advice offered by your Excellency to His Imperial Majesty was thoroughly in accordance with the views of His Majesty's Government.

In their opinion the condition of the population in this portion of the Turkish Empire has become almost intolerable, and the need for measures of reform is urgent. They agree with your Excellency that the appointment of one or more Christians of established position and reputation to take part in the Commission of Inquiry now sitting at the Porte, and on that of inspection sent to the spot, would be advantageous. But what is most urgently needed at the present moment is not inquiry but measures of immediate and practical reform in the Administration. For this purpose, as stated by your Excellency, the expedient most calculated to secure success and to command public confidence is not so much the introduction of theoretical changes of system, or limitations as regards the creed of highly-placed officials, as the appointment of European experts of tried ability and integrity in the Departments of Justice and Finance, and of a certain number of carefully-selected European officers to reorganize the gendarmerie and police. The presence of such officers in the disturbed districts would not only be a considerable guarantee against the recurrence of acts of cruelty and oppression, but would give far better opportunities than at present exist for examining and checking the exaggerated reports of outrages which are now disseminated by both sides for the purpose of inflaming public opinion.

It is, of course, obvious that without adequate financial arrangements for the payment of the various branches of the Administration no reforms can be carried into practical effect.

These are the salient points on which His Majesty's Government think it necessary to lay stress. From the reports which have reached me from other capitals I am led to believe that the attention of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Governments has equally been directed to the necessity of immediate improvement in the administration of the European provinces of Turkey. His Majesty's Government await with interest the communication, which they are given to understand will shortly be made to the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin, as to the result of the recent conference between Count Lamsdorff and Count Goluchowski. The position of Austria-Hungary and Russia gives to those States special opportunities of observation and influence in the Balkan Peninsula; and His Majesty's Government will be ready to give their best support to any practical suggestions which the Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburgh may wish to press upon the Porte with the object of affording a remedy for the present evils.

In my despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna of the 6th instant (of which your Excellency will receive a copy) I have given an account of some observations which I made on that day to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in reference to the Macedonian question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.